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CONFIDENTIAL.

PART IX.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

AFFAIRS OF TURKEY.

January 1877.

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CONFIDENTIAL.

Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Turkey.

PART IX.

No. 1.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 1, 1877.)

(No. 49. Political.)

Erzeroom, December 14, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE heard from a very good source that the Russian Consul here has received what appear to be Circular instructions to be prepared to leave for the frontier immediately on receiving orders to do so. The instructions contain also orders as to what is to be done for the Consular employés.

Employés, being Russian subjects, are to leave the country and await final instructions near the frontier.

Employés, not being Russian subjects, are to be discharged with a gratification of two months' pay.

Cavasses, though not taken away, are to be considered as still in the service, and will receive their wages, though the Consulate may be absent.

M. Voinoff, who was represented as Cancellier of the Consulate, has left for Gumri with his family.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 2.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 1, 1877.)

(No. 50. Political. Confidential.)

Erzeroom, December 14, 1876.

My Lord,

THE Russian Consul informed me yesterday that, having discovered that agents had come here from Daghestan to offer the aid of 60,000 Lesghae in case of war, and that these agents were in communication with the Government at Constantinople, through the son of the late Sheikh Shamyl, he reported the circumstance, with all the details he could collect, to his Government.

Measures were immediately taken in the Caucassus to prevent any movement, and the authorities having discovered that bands were forming, at once adopted energetic measures, and a great many arrests have been made.

M. Obermüller added that he had received the thanks of his Government for the activity he had shown.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

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No. 3.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 1, 1877.)

(No. 51. Political.) *Erzeroom, December* 14, 1876.

My Lord,

FROM information I have received it appears that many of the Koordish clans have openly cast off all allegiance to the Sultan, and while some are in revolt others are in the pay of Russia, and receive their orders from the Government of that country.

The two battalions which held positions in the district of Dersim having been withdrawn, the Koords have, I am told, burnt the barracks which were constructed there.

This was done almost in the presence of the retiring troops.

In the Province of Van, and in the country about Seird, the Koords are quite independent, and the authorities are powerless.

The Turkish authorities may try to conceal the fact even from themselves, but there is little room left for doubt that if hostilities take place thousands of Turkish Koords will fight under the Russian flag.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 4.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 1, 1877.)

(No. 52. Political.) *Erzeroom, December* 14, 1876.

My Lord,

NUMEROUS reports have reached me of the excesses committed by the regular troops in the various villages they pass through on their marches.

The villages between Erzeroom and Kars have suffered very much.

The inhabitants have to supply whatever the Government may require of them.

They have to lodge free of charge all the soldiers marching to Kars, and they have in addition to procure whatever the officers and soldiers may ask for, or submit to being beaten or otherwise maltreated.

At Baiboort, a town on the road to Trebizond, all the traders have been obliged to close their shops to save their property, as the soldiers returning from Constantinople do not hesitate to appropriate whatever they require, and the authorities there have openly stated that they have no power to control the troops.

At Erzeroom, where a semblance of discipline is maintained, the bazaars are the scenes of daily strife between soldiers, who try to possess themselves of things for which they cannot pay, and traders who try to prevent them, and who frequently get severely handled for their efforts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 5.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 1, 1877.)

(No. 12.) *Tiflis, December* 17, 1876.

My Lord,

MORE horses arrived—orders have been given to purchase a larger number of horses.

A quantity of ammunition has arrived from Baku.

I learn it is intended to place 30,000 men between Ozuet and Loukoum Kala, and 80,000 on centre and left of frontier. The object is apparently Erzeroum. There are three principal roads to Erzeroum by which Russian troops can march, one by Kars, one by Ardahau, one by Alashker; the passes in each of these should be fortified; I am told that all these roads are open to the passage of artillery. It is impossible to say by which Turkish territory will be entered, but I think it probable that a force will attempt to pass by each route, the mass going by the direct route after leaving 15,000 to invest Kars. The placing so large a force on the right would seem to denote an intention of attacking Batum. 6,000 more men have arrived; 18,000 more requisite to complete the reinforcements

expected; total of army at Tiflis and on frontier is now about 80,000. If really intended to put 30,000 on right of frontier, further reinforcements will be necessary.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. T. RICKETTS.

No. 6.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 1, 1877.)

(No. 13.) *Tiflis, December* 19, 1876.

My Lord,

OF the reinforcements mentioned in my despatch No. 3, about 22,000 have arrived, and remainder will be here before the end of this month.

The army on the frontier at the end of this month will be about 100,000 of all arms.

The following might be useful:—Distance from Akhalzik to Erzeroum by Ardahan is 306 versts; from Alexandropol to Erzeroum by Kars 243 versts; from Erivan to Bajazet 125 versts; from Trebizond to Erzeroum 279 versts; from Erzeroum to Bajazet 267 versts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. T. RICKETTS.

P.S.—The Russian General commanding right of frontier is, I am told, very incapable to have command of 30,000 men.

J. T. R.

No. 7.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 1, 1877.)

(No. 301. Confidential.) *Athens, December* 21, 1876.

My Lord,

DURING a visit which M. Tricoupi paid to me the day before yesterday, he spoke at some length of the position of Greece and of the neighbouring Hellenic populations, with reference to the Ottoman Government and to the present state of the Eastern question.

He stated it to be his opinion that the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire for some time to come was very much to be desired in the interests of Hellenism; that to the Greeks the question at present was not between them and Turkey, but between them and Panslavism; that the true policy for the Porte would be to come to an understanding with Greece and with the Hellenic populations, undertaking to grant the same administrative privileges to the latter as to the Slavs, so as to insure their good government, to support them against encroachments or injustice on the part of the Slavs, and to remove the Circassians from amongst them.

The Greeks, on their part, M. Tricoupi said, would give no further uneasiness to the Ottoman Government, would live upon friendly terms with the Mussulman populations, and would probably be ready to assist in the defence of Turkey in times of need.

I observed to M. Tricoupi that the Porte could not be expected to enter into any engagements by which Greece would be admitted to acquire the right of protecting the Hellenic subjects of Turkey, or of interfering on their behalf.

He answered that there would be no occasion for this, and that it would be easy to come to an understanding upon the subject without any formal Treaty; and he seemed to assent when I asked him whether he considered that an understanding between the Porte and the Patriarch of Constantinople would be sufficient for the purpose.

M. Simos, who called upon me this morning, also told me that the Greeks now looked upon the Slavs as their direct and only dangerous enemies, and put the Turks quite in the background ("en seconde ligne").

That such is the prevailing feeling throughout the country has been confirmed to me by the leading Greeks of all parties with whom I have lately conversed.

The recognition by Europe of a Bulgarian or Slavonic State, which had not the northern slope of the Balkans for its southernmost boundary, would certainly be felt as a

cruel and summary death-blow to the ultimate hopes and aspirations of the Hellenic race.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

P.S.—An ethnological map of Turkey in Europe and Greece, recently published in London by Stanford, in accordance with Greek views, has been received by the Hellenic Government, and has given great satisfaction here.

I have not as yet seen it.

W. S.

No. 8.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 1, 1877.)

(No. 1352.)
Constantinople, December 22, 1876.

My Lord,

THE late Grand Vizier, just before his resignation, spoke to Mr. Sandison about the report which had reached him of propositions being made for the employment of a small body of Belgians in Bulgaria.

His Highness said that, in addition to the other objections which he should be obliged to make to such a measure, there was a consideration which must not be lost sight of.

It might in two different ways bring about collisions, not to be effectually guarded against by any precaution on the part of the Porte, and which would inevitably lead to formidable complications and to results disastrous to Turkey.

The presence of these troops would exasperate the Mussulmans, a portion of whom, especially the Pomaks, are a set of semi-savages, who would be quite capable of waylaying and killing some of them in the passes of the Balkans without regard to consequences.

Collisions might, moreover, be easily brought about by revolutionary emissaries, or others, who might hope that they would be immediately followed by a foreign occupation.

The danger apprehended by Mehemet Ruschdi Pasha can certainly not be regarded as groundless or slight.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 9.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 1, 1877.)

(No. 1351.)
Constantinople, December 23, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose the official translation in French of the Constitution, which was proclaimed this morning.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 9.

Constitution promulguée le 7 Zilhidjé 1293 (*$\frac{11}{23}$ Décembre*, 1876.)

De l'Empire Ottoman.

Article 1. L'EMPIRE Ottoman comprend les contrées et possessions actuelles et les provinces privilégiées.

Il forme un tout indivisible dont aucune partie ne peut jamais être détachée par quelque motif que ce soit.

Art. 2. Constantinople est la capitale de l'Empire Ottoman.

Cette ville ne possède, à l'exclusion des autres villes de l'Empire, aucun privilége ni immunité qui lui soit propre.

Art. 3. La souveraineté Ottomane qui réunit dans la personne du Souverain le

Kalifat Suprême de l'Islamisme, appartient à l'aîné des Princes de la dynastie d'Osman, conformément aux règles établis *ab antiquo*.

Art. 4. Sa Majesté le Sultan est, à titre de Kalife Suprême, le protecteur de la religion Musulmane.

Il est le Souverain et le Padichah de tous les Ottomans.

Art. 5. Sa Majesté le Sultan est irresponsable; sa personne est sacrée.

Art. 6. La liberté des membres de la dynastie Impériale Ottomane, leurs biens personnels, immobiliers et mobiliers, leur liste civile pendant toute leur vie, sont sous la garantie de tous.

Art. 7. Sa Majesté le Sultan compte au nombre de ses droits souverains les prérogatives suivantes:

Il nomme et révoque les Ministres; il confère les grades, les fonctions et les insignes de ses ordres; il donne l'investiture aux Chefs des Provinces privilégiées, dans les formes déterminées par les priviléges qui leur ont été concédés; il fait frapper la monaie; son nom est prononcé dans les mosquées pendant la prière publique; il conclut les Traités avec les Puissances; il déclare la guerre; il fait la paix; il commande les armées de terre et de mer; il ordonne les mouvements militaires; il fait exécuter les dispositions du chéri (la loi sacrée) et des lois; il fait les règlements d'administration publique; il remet ou commue les peines prononcées par les Tribunaux criminels; il convoque et proroge l'Assemblée Générale; il dissout, s'il le juge nécessaire, la Chambre des Députés, sauf à faire procéder à la réélection des Députés.

Du Droit Public des Ottomans.

Art. 8. Tous les sujets de l'Empire sont indistinctement appelés Ottomans, quelle que soit la religion qu'ils professent.

La qualité d'Ottoman s'acquiert et se perd suivant les cas spécifiés par la loi.

Art. 9. Tous les Ottomans jouissent de la liberté individuelle, à la condition de ne pas porter atteinte à la liberté d'autrui.

Art. 10. La liberté individuelle est absolument inviolable.

Nul ne peut, sous aucun prétexte, subir une peine quelconque, que dans les cas déterminés par la loi et suivant les formes qu'elle prescrit.

Art. 11. L'Islamisme est la religion de l'Etat.

Tout en sauvegardant ce principe, l'Etat protége le libre exercice de tous les cultes reconnus dans l'Empire, et maintient les privilèges religieux accordés aux diverses communautés, à la condition qu'il ne soit pas porté atteinte à l'ordre public ou aux bonnes mœurs.

Art. 12. La presse est libre dans les limites tracées par la loi.

Art. 13. Les Ottomans ont la faculté de former des associations commerciales, industrielles ou agricoles, dans les limites déterminées par les lois et les règlements.

Art. 14. Une ou plusieurs personnes appartenant à la nationalité Ottomane ont le droit de présenter des pétitions à l'autorité compétente au sujet d'infractions aux lois ou règlements, commises soit à leur préjudice personnel soit au préjudice de l'intérêt public, et pourront également adresser, sous forme de réclamation, des pétitions signées à l'Assemblée Générale Ottomane pour se plaindre de la conduite des fonctionnaires ou employés de l'Etat.

Art. 15. L'enseignement est libre.

Chaque Ottoman peut faire des cours publics ou privés, à la condition de se conformer aux lois.

Art. 16. Toutes les écoles sont placées sous la surveillance de l'Etat.

Il sera avisé aux moyens propres à unifier et à régulariser l'enseignement donné à tous les Ottomans; mais il ne pourra pas être porté atteinte à l'enseignement religieux des diverses communautés.

Art. 17. Tous les Ottomans sont égaux devant la loi.

Ils ont les mêmes droits et les mêmes devoirs envers le pays, sans préjudice de ce qui concerne la religion.

Art. 18. L'admission aux fonctions publiques a pour condition la connaissance du Turc, qui est la langue officielle de l'Etat.

Art. 19. Tous les Ottomans sont admis aux fonctions publiques suivant leurs aptitudes, leur mérite et leur capacité.

Art. 20. L'assiette et la répartition des impôts s'établissent, conformément aux lois et aux règlements spéciaux, en proportion de la fortune de chaque contribuable.

Art. 21. La propriété immobilière et mobilière, régulièrement établie, est garantie.

Aucune expropriation ne peut avoir lieu que pour cause d'utilité publique, dûment

constatée et contre le paiement préalable, conformément à la loi, de la valeur de l'immeuble à exproprier.

Art. 22. Le domicile est inviolable.

L'autorité ne peut pénétrer de force dans le domicile de qui que ce soit, que dans les cas déterminés par la loi.

Art. 23. Nul ne peut être astreint à comparaître devant un Tribunal autre que le Tribunal compétent suivant la Loi de Procédure qui sera édictée.

Art. 24. La confiscation des biens, la corvée et le Djérimé (exaction sous forme de pénalité pécuniaire) sont prohibés.

Toutefois les contributions levées légalement en temps de guerre et les mesures nécessitées par l'état de guerre, sont exceptées de cette disposition.

Art. 25. Aucune somme d'argent ne peut être perçue, à titre d'impôt ou de taxe, ou sous toute autre dénomination, qu'en vertu d'une loi.

Art. 26. La torture et la question, sous toutes les formes, sont complètement et absolument prohibées.

Des Ministres.

Art. 27. Sa Majesté le Sultan investit de la charge de Grand Vézir et de celle de Cheik-ul-Islam, les personnages que sa haute confiance croit devoir y appeler.

La nomination des autres Ministres a lieu par Iradé (Ordonnance) Impérial.

Art. 28. Le Conseil des Ministres se réunit sous la présidence du Grand Vézir.

Les attributions du Conseil des Ministres comprennent toutes les affaires importantes, intérieures ou extérieures, de l'Etat.

Celles de ses délibérations qui doivent être soumises à la sanction de Sa Majesté le Sultan, sont rendues exécutoires par Iradé Impérial.

Art. 29. Chaque chef de Département Ministériel administre, dans la limite de ses attributions, les affaires qui ressortissent à son Département.

Pour celles qui dépassent cette limite, il en réfère au Grand Vézir.

Le Grand Vézir donne suite aux rapports qui lui sont adressés par les chefs des divers Départements, soit en les déférant, s'il y a lieu, au Conseil des Ministres et ensuite en les présentant à la sanction Impériale, soit, dans le cas contraire, en statuant lui-même ou en les soumettant à la décision de Sa Majesté le Sultan.

Un règlement spécial déterminera ces diverses catégories d'affaires pour chaque Département Ministériel.

Art. 30. Les Ministres sont responsables des faits ou actes de leur gestion.

Art. 31. Si un ou plusieurs membres de la Chambre des Députés veulent porter plainte contre un Ministre, en raison de sa responsabilité et à l'occasion de faits dont la Chambre a le droit de connaître, la demande contenant la plainte est remise au Président, qui la renvoie, dans les trois jours, au bureau chargé, en vertu du règlement intérieur d'examiner la plainte et de décider s'il y a lieu de la soumettre aux délibérations de la Chambre.

La décision du bureau est prise à la majorité des voix, après que les renseignements nécessaires ont été obtenus et que des explications ont été fournies par le Ministre en cause.

Si le bureau est d'avis de soumettre la plainte à la Chambre, le rapport constatant cette décision est lu en séance publique, et la Chambre, après avoir entendu les explications du Ministre en cause appelé à assister à la séance, ou de son délégué, vote à la majorité absolue de deux tiers des voix, sur les conclusions du rapport.

En cas d'adoption de ces conclusions, une adresse, demandant la mise en jugement du Ministre en cause, est transmise au Grand Vézir, qui la soumet à la sanction de Sa Majesté le Sultan, et le renvoi devant la Haute Cour, a lieu en vertu d'un Iradé Impérial.

Art. 32. Une loi spéciale déterminera la procédure à suivre pour le jugement des Ministres.

Art. 33. Il n'existe aucune différence entre les Ministres et les particuliers en ce qui concerne les procès privés et qui sont en dehors de leurs fonctions.

Les procès de ce genre sont déférés à la juridiction ordinaire.

Art. 34. Le Ministre dont la mise en jugement a été prononcée par la Chambre d'Accusation de la Haute Cour, est suspendu de ses fonctions jusqu'à ce qu'il ait été déchargé de l'accusation portée contre lui.

Art. 35. En cas de rejet, par un vote motivé de la Chambre des Députés, d'un projet de loi pour l'adoption duquel le Ministère croit devoir insister, Sa Majesté le Sultan ordonne, dans l'exercice de sa souveraineté, soit le changement du Ministère, soit la

dissolution de la Chambre, à charge de réélection des députés dans le délai fixé par la loi.

Art. 36. En cas de nécessité urgente, si l'Assemblée Générale n'est pas réunie, le Ministère peut prendre des dispositions en vue de prémunir l'Etat contre un danger, ou de sauvegarder la sécurité publique.

Ces dispositions, sanctionnées par Iradé Impérial, ont provisoirement force de loi, si elles ne sont pas contraires à la Constitution.

Elles doivent être soumises à l'Assemblée Générale dès que celle-ci est réunie.

Art. 37. Chaque Ministre a le droit d'assister aux séances du Sénat et de la Chambre des Députés ou de s'y faire représenter par un fonctionnaire supérieur de son département.

Il a également le droit d'être entendu avant tout membre de la Chambre qui aurait demandé la parole.

Art. 38. Lorsqu'à la suite d'une décision prise à la majorité des voix, un Ministre est invité à se rendre à la Chambre des Députés pour fournir des explications, il est tenu de répondre aux questions qui lui sont adressées, soit en se présentant personnellement, soit en déléguant un fonctionnaire supérieur de son département.

Néanmoins, il a le droit d'ajourner sa réponse, s'il le juge nécessaire, en prenant sur lui la responsabilité de cet ajournement.

Des Fonctionnaires Publics.

Art. 39. Toutes les nominations aux diverses fonctions publiques auront lieu conformément aux règlements qui détermineront les conditions de mérite et de capacité exigées pour l'admission aux emplois de l'Etat.

Tout fonctionnaire nommé dans ces conditions ne pourra être révoqué ou changé :

S'il n'est pas prouvé que sa conduite justifie légalement sa révocation ;

S'il n'a pas donné sa démission, ou bien encore si sa révocation n'est pas jugée indispensable par le Gouvernement.

Les fonctionnaires qui auront fait preuve de bonne conduite et d'honnêteté, ainsi que ceux dont la mise en disponibilité aura été jugée indispensable par le Gouvernement, auront droit, soit à l'avancement, soit à la pension de retraite, soit au traitement de disponibilité, conformément aux dispositions qui seront déterminées par un règlement spécial.

Art. 40. Les attributions des différentes fonctions seront fixées par des règlements spéciaux.

Chaque fonctionnaire est responsable dans la limite de ses attributions.

Art. 41. Tout fonctionnaire est tenu de respecter son supérieur ; mais l'obéissance n'est due qu'aux ordres donnés dans les limites tracées par la loi.

Pour les actes contraires à la loi, le fait d'avoir obéi à un supérieur ne peut dégager la responsabilité du fonctionnaire qui les a exécutés.

De l'Assemblée Générale.

Art. 42. L'Assemblée Générale se compose de deux Chambres : la Chambre des Seigneurs ou Sénat et la Chambre des Députés.

Art. 43. Les deux Chambres se réunissent le 1 Novembre de chaque année ; l'ouverture a lieu par Iradé Impérial.

La clôture, fixée au 1 Mars suivant, a également lieu en vertu d'un Iradé Impérial.

Aucune des deux Chambres ne peut se réunir hors le temps de session de l'autre Chambre.

Art. 44. Sa Majesté le Sultan peut, suivant l'exigence des circonstances, avancer l'époque de l'ouverture et abréger ou prolonger la Session.

Art. 45. La solennité de l'ouverture a lieu en présence de Sa Majesté le Sultan, soit en personne, soit représenté par le Grand Vézir et en présence des Ministres et des membres des deux Chambres.

Il est donné lecture d'un discours Impérial exposant la situation intérieure de l'Empire et l'état de ses relations extérieures, dans le cours de l'année écoulée, et indiquant les mesures dont l'adoption, pour l'année suivante, est jugée nécessaire.

Art. 46. Tous les membres de l'Assemblée Générale prêtent le serment d'être fidèles à Sa Majesté le Sultan et à la patrie, d'observer la Constitution, de remplir le mandat qui leur est confié et de s'abstenir de tout acte contraire à ces devoirs.

La prestation du serment a lieu, pour les nouveaux membres, à l'ouverture de la Session, en présence du Grand Vézir et, après l'ouverture, en présence de leurs présidents respectifs, et en séance publique de la Chambre dont ils font partie.

Art. 47. Les membres de l'Assemblée Générale sont libres dans l'émission de leu opinions ou de leurs votes.

Aucun d'eux ne peut être lié par des instructions ou promesses, ni influencé par des menaces.

Il ne peut être poursuivi pour les opinions ou les votes émis par lui au cours des délibérations de la Chambre dont il fait partie, à moins qu'il n'ait contrevenu au règlement intérieur de cette Chambre, auquel cas les dispositions édictées par le règlement lui sont appliquées.

Art. 48. Tout membre de l'Assemblée Générale qui, à la majorité absolue des deux tiers de la Chambre dont il fait partie, est accusé de trahison, de tentative de violation de la Constitution ou de concussion, ou qui a été frappé légalement d'une condamnation à l'emprisonnement ou à l'exil, est déchu de sa qualité de Sénateur ou de Député.

Le jugement et l'application de la peine appartiennent au Tribunal compétent.

Art. 49. Chaque membre de l'Assemblée Générale émet son vote en personne.

Il a le droit de s'abstenir au moment du vote.

Art. 50. Nul ne peut être à la fois membre des deux Chambres.

Art. 51. Aucune délibération ne peut avoir lieu, dans l'une ou l'autre Chambre, qu'autant que la moitié plus un de ses membres se trouvent réunis.

Hors le cas où la majorité des deux tiers est requise, toute résolution est prise à la majorité absolue des membres présents.

En cas de partage, la voix du Président est prépondérante.

Art. 52. Toute pétition relative à des intérêts privés, présentée à l'une ou à l'autre Chambre, est rejetée si les recherches auxquelles elle donne lieu ont eu pour résultat de constater que le pétitionnaire ne s'est pas adressé en premier lieu aux fonctionnaires publics que la demande concerne ou à l'autorité de laquelle relèvent ces fonctionnaires.

Art. 53. L'initiative de la proposition d'une loi ou de la modification d'une loi existante appartient au Ministère.

Le Sénat et la Chambre des Députés peuvent aussi demander une nouvelle loi ou la modification d'une loi existante sur des matières comprises dans leurs attributions.

Dans ce dernier cas, la demande est soumise par le Grand Vézir à Sa Majesté le Sultan et, s'il y a lieu, le Conseil d'Etat est chargé en vertu d'un Iradé Impérial, de préparer le projet de loi qui fait l'objet de la proposition, sur les renseignements et éclaircissements fournis par les départements compétents.

Art. 54. Les projets de loi élaborés par le Conseil d'Etat, sont soumis en premier lieu à la Chambre des Députés et, en second lieu, au Sénat.

Ces projets n'ont force de loi que si, après avoir été adoptés par les deux Chambres, ils sont sanctionnés par Iradé Impérial.

Tout projet de loi définitivement rejeté par l'une des deux Chambres ne peut être soumis à une nouvelle délibération dans le cours de la même session.

Art. 55. Un projet de loi n'est pas considéré comme adopté s'il n'a été voté successivement par la Chambre des Députés et le Sénat, à la majorité des voix, Article par Article, et si l'ensemble du projet n'a réuni la majorité des voix dans chacune des deux Chambres.

Art. 56. A l'exception des Ministres, de leurs délégués et des fonctionnaires convoqués par une invitation spéciale, nul ne peut être introduit dans l'une ou l'autre Chambre, ni admis à faire une communication quelconque, soit qu'il se présente en son nom, soit comme représentant un groupe d'individus.

Art. 57. Les délibérations des Chambres ont lieu en langue Turque.

Les projets sont imprimés et distribués avant le jour fixé pour la discussion.

Art. 58. Les votes sont émis : par appel nominal ; par des signes de manifestation extérieure, ou par voie de scrutin secret.

Le vote au scrutin secret est subordonné à une décision de la Chambre, prise à la majorité des membres présents.

Art. 59. La police intérieure de chaque Chambre est exercée par son président.

Du Sénat.

Art. 60. Le Président et les membres du Sénat sont nommés directement par Sa Majesté le Sultan.

Le nombre des Sénateurs ne peut excéder le tiers des membres de la Chambre des Députés.

Art. 61. Pour pouvoir être nommé Sénateur, il faut :

S'être rendu, par ses actes, digne de la confiance publique ou avoir rendu des services signalés à l'Etat ;

Etre âgé d'au moins quarante ans.

Art. 62. Les Sénateurs sont nommés à vie.

La dignité de Sénateur peut être conférée aux personnages en disponibilité ayant exercé les fonction de Ministre, Gouverneur-Général (Vali), Commandant de Corps d'Armée, Cazasker (Grand Juge), Ambassadeur ou Ministre Plénipotentiaire, Patriarche, Chakham-Bachi (Grand Rabbin), aux Généraux de Division des armées de terre et de mer et, en général, aux personnes réunissant les conditions requises.

Les membres du Sénat, appelés, sur leur demande, à d'autres fonctions, perdent leur qualité de Sénateur.

Art. 63. Le traitement de Sénateur est fixé à la somme mensuelle de 10,000 piastres.

Le Sénateur qui reçoit du Trésor un traitement ou des allocations à un autre titre, n'a droit qu'au complément, si leur montant est inférieur à 10,000 piastres.

Si ce chiffre est égal ou supérieur au traitement de Sénateur, il continue à en toucher le montant.

Art. 64. Le Sénat examine les projets de loi ou de Budget qui lui sont transmis par la Chambre des Députés.

Si dans le cours de l'examen d'un projet de loi, le Sénat relève une disposition contraire aux droits souverains de Sa Majesté le Sultan, à la liberté, à la Constitution, à l'intégrité territoriale de l'Empire, à la sûreté intérieure du pays, à l'intérêt de la défense de la patrie ou aux bonnes mœurs, il le rejette définitivement par un vote motivé, ou il le renvoie, accompagné de ses observations, à la Chambre des Députés, en demandant qu'il soit amendé ou modifié dans le sens de ces observations.

Les projets de loi adoptés par le Sénat sont revêtus de son approbation et transmis au Grand Vézir.

Le Sénat examine les pétitions qui lui sont présentées ; il transmet au Grand Vézir celles de ces pétitions qu'il croit mériter ce renvoi, en les accompagnant de ses observations.

De la Chambre des Députés.

Art. 65. Le nombre des Députés est fixé à raison d'un Député sur 50,000 individus du sexe masculin appartenant à la nationalité Ottomane.

Art. 66. L'élection a lieu au scrutin secret. Le mode d'élection sera déterminé par une loi spéciale.

Art. 67. Le mandat de Député est incompatible avec les fonctions publiques, à l'exception de celles de Ministre.

Tout autre fonctionnaire public, élu à la députation, est libre de l'accepter ou de la refuser, mais, en cas d'acceptation, il doit résigner ses fonctions.

Art 68. Ne peuvent être élus Députés :

1. Ceux qui n'appartiennent pas à la nationalité Ottomane ;

2. Ceux qui, en vertu du règlement spécial en vigueur, jouissent des immunités attachées au service étranger qu'ils exercent ;

3. Ceux qui ne connaissent pas le Turc ;

4. Ceux qui n'ont pas l'âge de trente ans révolus ;

5. Les gens attachés au service d'un particulier ;

6. Les faillis non-réhabilités ;

7. Ceux qui sont notoirement déconsidérés par leur conduite ;

8. Les individus qui ont été frappés d'interdiction judiciaire, tant que cette interdiction n'est pas levée ;

9. Ceux qui ne jouissent pas de leurs droits civils ;

10. Ceux qui prétendent appartenir à une nation étrangère.

Après l'expiration de la première période de quatre années, l'une des conditions de l'éligibilité à la députation sera de savoir lire le Turc, et autant que possible, écrire dans cette langue.

Art. 69. Les élections générales des Députés ont lieu tous les quatre ans.

Le mandat de chaque Député ne dure que quatre ans ; mais il est rééligible.

Art. 70. Les élections générales commencent, au plus tard, quatre mois avant le 1er Novembre, qui est la date fixée pour la réunion de la Chambre.

Art. 71. Chaque membre de la Chambre des Députés représente l'universalité des Ottomans et non exclusivement la circonscription qui l'a nommé.

Art. 72. Les électeurs sont tenus de choisir leurs Députés parmi les habitants de la province à laquelle ils appartiennent.

Art. 73. En cas de dissolution de la Chambre par Iradé Impérial, les élections générales doivent commencer en temps nécessaire pour que la Chambre puisse se réunir de nouveau, au plus tard, dans les six mois de la date de la dissolution.

Art. 74. En cas de décès, d'interdiction judiciaire, d'absence prolongée, de perte de la

qualité de Député résultant d'une condamnation ou de l'acceptation de fonctions publiques, il est procédé à un remplacement, conformément aux prescriptions de la loi électorale, et dans un délai tel que le nouveau Député puisse exercer son mandat, au plus tard, dans la session suivante.

Art. 75. Le mandat des Députés élus pour remplir une place vacante ne dure que jusqu'aux prochaines élections générales.

Art. 76. Il sera alloué par le Trésor, à chaque Député, 20,000 piastres par session et ses frais de voyage pour l'aller et le retour.

Le chiffre de ces frais sera établi conformément aux dispositions du règlement qui régit les indemnités de route payées aux fonctionnaires civils de l'Etat, et calculé sur la base d'un traitement mensuel de 5,000 piastres.

Art. 77. Le Président et les deux Vice-Présidents de la Chambre des Députés sont choisis, par Sa Majesté le Sultan, sur une liste de neuf candidats élus par la Chambre, à la majorité des voix, dont trois pour la Présidence, trois pour la première Vice-Présidence et trois pour la deuxième Vice-Présidence.

La nomination du Président et des Vice-Présidents a lieu par Iradé Impérial.

Art. 78. Les séances de la Chambre des Députés sont publiques.

Toutefois, la Chambre pourra se former en comité secret si la proposition en est faite par les Ministres, ou par le Président ou par quinze membres, et que cette proposition est votée en comité secret.

Art. 79. Aucun député ne peut, pendant la durée de la session, être arrêté ou poursuivi, sauf le cas de flagrant délit, que sur une décision prise par la majorité de la Chambre accordant l'autorisation de poursuivre.

Art. 80. La Chambre des Députés discute les projets de loi qui lui sont soumis.

Elle adopte, amende ou rejette les dispositions concernant les finances ou la Constitution.

Elle examine en détails les dépenses générales de l'Etat comprises dans la loi du Budget, et en arrête le montant avec les Ministres.

Elle détermine également, d'accord avec les Ministres, la nature, le montant et le mode de répartition et de réalisation des recettes destinées à faire face aux dépenses.

Du pouvoir Judiciaire.

Art. 81. Les juges nommés conformément à la loi spéciale sur cette matière et munis du brevet d'investiture (bérat), sont inamovibles; mais ils peuvent donner leur démission.

L'avancement des juges dans l'ordre hiérarchique, leur déplacement, leur mise à la retraite, leur révocation en cas de condamnation judiciaire, sont soumis aux dispositions de la même loi.

Cette loi détermine les conditions et qualités requises pour exercer les fonctions de juge ou les autres fonctions de l'ordre judiciaire.

Art. 82. Les audiences de tous les tribunaux sont publiques.

La publication des jugements est autorisée.

Toutefois, dans les cas spécifiés par la loi, le Tribunal peut tenir l'audience à huis-clos.

Art. 83. Tout individu peut, dans l'intérêt de sa défense, faire usage devant le Tribunal des moyens permis par la loi.

Art. 84. Aucun Tribunal ne peut se refuser, sous quelque prétexte que ce soit, à juger une affaire qui est de sa compétence.

Il ne peut non plus en arrêter ou ajourner le jugement, après qu'il a commencé à procéder à l'examen ou à l'instruction, à moins qu'il n'y ait désistement de la part du demandeur.

Toutefois, en matière pénale, l'action publique continue à s'exercer conformément à la loi, dans le cas même où le demandeur s'est désisté.

Art. 85. Chaque affaire est jugée par le Tribunal auquel cette affaire ressortit.

Les procès entre les particuliers et l'Etat sont de la compétence des Tribunaux ordinaires.

Art. 86. Aucune ingérence ne peut être exercé dans les Tribunaux.

Art. 87. Les affaires concernant le Chéri sont jugés par les Tribunaux du Chéri; le jugement des affaires civiles appartient aux Tribunaux Civils.

Art. 88. Les diverses catégories de Tribunaux, leur compétence, leurs attributions et les émoluments des juges, sont réglés par les lois.

Art. 89. En dehors des Tribunaux ordinaires, il ne peut être institué, sous quelque dénomination que ce soit, de Tribunaux extraordinaires, ni de commissions pour juger certaines affaires spéciales.

Toutefois, l'arbitrage (takkim) et la nomination de "muvella" (Juge délégué), sont permis dans les formes déterminées par la loi.

Art. 90. Aucun juge ne peut cumuler ses fonctions avec d'autres fonctions rétribuées par l'Etat.

Art. 91. Il sera institué des procureurs impériaux chargés d'exercer l'action publique.

Leurs attributions et leur hiérarchie seront fixées par la loi.

De la Haute Cour.

92. La Haute Cour est formée de trente membres, dont dix Sénateurs, dix Conseillers d'Etat, et dix membres choisis parmi les Présidents et les membres de la Cour de Cassation et de la Cour d'Appel.

Tous les membres sont désignés par le sort.

La Haute Cour est convoquée lorsqu'il y a lieu, par Iradé Impérial, et se réunit à l'Hôtel du Sénat.

Ses attributions consistent à juger :

Les Ministres ;

Le Président et les membres de la Cour de Cassation ;

Et toutes autres personnes accusées du crime de lèse-majesté ou d'attentat contre la sûreté de l'Etat.

Art. 93. La Haute Cour se compose de deux Chambres : la Chambre d'Accusation et la Chambre de Jugement.

La Chambre d'Accusation est formée de neuf membres désignés par le sort parmi les membres de la Haute Cour, et dont trois Sénateurs, trois Conseillers d'Etat, et trois membres de la Cour de Cassation ou de la Cour d'Appel.

Art. 94. Le renvoi devant la Chambre de Jugement est prononcé par la Chambre d'Accusation, à la majorité de deux tiers de ses membres.

Les membres appartenant à la Chambre d'Accusation ne peuvent prendre part aux délibérations de la Chambre de Jugement.

Art. 95. La Chambre de Jugement est formée de vingt-un membres, dont sept Sénateurs, sept Conseillers d'Etat, et sept membres de la Cour de Cassation ou de la Cour d'Appel.

Elle juge à la majorité des deux tiers de ses membres et conformément aux lois en vigueur les procès qui lui sont renvoyés par la Chambre d'Accusation.

Ses jugements ne sont susceptibles ni d'appel ni de recours en cassation.

Des Finances.

Art. 96. Aucun impôt au profit de l'Etat ne peut être établi, réparti, ni perçu qu'en vertu d'une loi.

Art. 97. Le Budget est la loi qui contient les prévisions des recettes et des dépenses de l'Etat.

Les impôts au profit de l'Etat sont régis par cette loi quant à leur assiette, leur répartition, et leur perception.

Art. 98. L'examen et le vote, par l'Assemblée Générale, de la Loi du Budget, a lieu par articles.

Les tableaux annexes, comprenant le détail des recettes et des dépenses, sont divisés en sections, chapitres, et articles, conformément au modèle défini par les règlements.

Ces tableaux sont votés par chapitres.

Art. 99. Le projet de loi du budget est soumis à la Chambre des Députés immédiatement après l'ouverture de la session, afin de rendre possible sa mise à exécution à partir du commencement de l'exercice auquel il se rapporte.

Art. 100. Aucune dépense extra-budgétaire ne peut être effectuée sur les fonds de l'Etat qu'en vertu d'une loi.

Art. 101. En cas d'urgence motivée par des circonstances extraordinaires, les Ministres peuvent, pendant l'absence de l'Assemblée Générale, créer, par Iradé Impérial, les ressources nécessaires et effectuer une dépense non prévue au budget, à la condition d'en saisir l'Assemblée Générale par un projet de loi, au début de sa plus prochaine réunion.

Art. 102. Le budget est voté pour un an ; il n'a force de loi que pour l'année à laquelle elle se rapporte.

Toutefois, si par suite de circonstances exceptionnelles, la Chambre des Députés est dissoute avant le vote du Budget, les Ministres peuvent, par un arrêté pris en vertu d'un Iradé Impérial, appliquer le budget de l'année précédente jusqu'à la session prochaine, sans que l'application provisoire de ce budget puisse dépasser le terme d'une année.

Art. 103. La loi de règlement définitif du Budget indique le montant des recettes réalisées et des paiements effectués sur les revenus et les dépenses de l'année à laquelle elle se rapporte.

Sa forme et ses divisions doivent être les mêmes que celles du Budget.

Art. 104. Le projet de loi de règlement définitif est soumis à la Chambre des Députés, au plus tard, dans le terme de quatre ans, à partir de la fin de l'année à laquelle il se rapporte.

Art. 105. Il sera institué une Cour des Comptes chargée de l'examen des opérations des comptables de finances, ainsi que des comptes annuels dressés par les divers Départements Ministériels.

Elle adressera chaque année à la Chambre des Députés un rapport spécial comprenant le résultat de ses travaux, accompagné de ses observations.

A la fin de chaque trimestre, elle présentera, à Sa Majesté le Sultan, par l'intermédiaire du Grand Vézir, un rapport contenant l'exposé de la situation financière.

Art. 106. La Cour des Comptes sera composée de douze membres inamovibles, nommés par Iradé Impérial.

Aucun d'eux ne pourra être révoqué sans que la proposition motivée de sa révocation ne soit approuvée par une décision de la Chambre des Députés, prise à la majorité des voix.

Art. 107. Les conditions et qualités exigées des membres de la Cour des Comptes, le détail de leurs attributions, les règles applicables en cas de démission, de remplacement, d'avancement et de mise à la retraite, ainsi que l'organisation des bureaux de la Cour, seront déterminés par une loi spéciale.

De l'Administration Provinciale.

Art. 108. L'administration des provinces aura pour base le principe de la décentralisation.

Les détails de cette organisation seront fixés par une loi.

Art. 109. Une loi spéciale règlera sur des bases plus larges l'élection des Conseils Administratifs de province (vilayet), de district (sandjak), et de canton (caza), ainsi que celle du Conseil Général qui se réunit annuellement au chef-lieu de chaque province.

Art. 110. Les attributions du Conseil Général Provincial seront fixées par la même loi spéciale et elles comprendront:

La faculté de délibérer sur les objets d'utilité publique, tels que l'établissement de voies de communications, l'organisation des caisses de crédit agricole, le développement de l'industrie, du commerce et de l'agriculture et la propagation de l'instruction publique.

Le droit de porter plainte aux autorités compétentes pour obtenir le redressement des faits ou actes commis en contravention des lois et règlements, soit dans la répartition ou la perception des impôts, soit en toute autre matière.

Art. 111. Il y aura dans chaque caza un Conseil afférent à chacune des différentes communautés. Ce Conseil sera chargé de contrôler:

1. L'administration des revenus des immeubles ou des fonds vakoufs (fondations pieuses) dont la destination spéciale est fixée par les dispositions expresses des fondateurs ou par l'usage;

2. L'emploi des fonds ou des biens affectés, par disposition testamentaire, à des actes de charité ou de bienfaisance.

3. L'administration des fonds des orphelins, conformément au règlement spécial qui régit la matière.

Chaque Conseil sera composé de membres élus par la communauté qu'il représente, conformément aux règlements spéciaux à établir.

Ces Conseils relèveront des autorités locales et des Conseils Généraux de province.

Art. 112. Les affaires municipales seront administrées, à Constantinople et dans les provinces, par des Conseils Municipaux élus.

L'organisation des Conseils Municipaux, leurs attributions et le mode d'élection de leurs membres, seront déterminés par une loi spéciale.

Dispositions Diverses.

Art. 113. En cas de constatation de faits ou d'indices de nature à faire prévoir des troubles sur un point du territoire de l'Empire, le Gouvernement Impérial a le droit d'y proclamer l'état de siége.

Les effets de l'état de siége consistent dans la suspension temporaire des lois civiles.

Le mode d'administration des localités soumises au régime de l'état de siége sera réglé par une loi spéciale.

A Sa Majesté le Sultan appartient le pouvoir exclusif d'expulser du territoire de l'Empire ceux qui, à la suite d'informations dignes de confiance recueillies par l'administration de la police, sont reconnus comme portant atteinte à la sûreté de l'Etat.

Art. 114. L'instruction primaire sera obligatoire pour tous les Ottomans.

Les détails d'application seront déterminés par une loi spéciale.

Art. 115. Aucune disposition de la Constitution ne peut, sous quelque prétexte que ce soit, être suspendue ou délaissée.

Art. 116. En cas de nécessité, dûment constatée, la Constitution peut être modifié dans quelques unes de ses dispositions. Cette modification est subordonnée aux conditions suivantes:—

Toute proposition de modification présentée soit par le Ministère, soit par l'une ou l'autre Chambre, devra être soumise en premier lieu aux délibérations de la Chambre des Députés.

Si la proposition est approuvée à la majorité des deux tiers des membres de cette Chambre, elle sera transmise au Sénat.

Dans le cas où le Sénat adopterait également la modification proposée à la majorité des deux tiers des Sénateurs, elle sera soumise à la sanction de Sa Majesté le Sultan.

Si elle est sanctionnée par Iradé Impérial, elle aura force de loi.

Toute disposition de la Constitution faisant l'objet d'une proposition de modification reste en vigueur jusqu'au moment où la proposition, après avoir subi l'épreuve des délibérations des Chambres, a été sanctionnée par Iradé Impérial.

Art. 117. L'interprétation des lois appartient:—

A la Cour de Cassation pour les lois civiles et pénales;

Au Conseil d'Etat, pour les lois administratives;

Et au Sénat pour les dispositions de la Constitution.

Art. 118. Toutes les dispositions des lois, règlements, us et coutumes actuellement en vigueur continueront d'être appliquées, tant qu'elles n'auront pas été modifiées ou abrogées par des lois ou règlements.

Art. 119. L'instruction provisoire du 10 Chéval, 1293 ($\frac{14}{26}$ Octobre, 1876) concernant l'Assemblée Générale, cessera d'avoir son effet à partir de la clôture de la première Session.

No. 10.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 1386.)

Constantinople, December 25, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose the copy of a telegram which I received two days ago from Vice-Admiral Sir James Drummond, stating that he proposed to proceed with the fleet to Salonica on the 26th instant.

The Marquis of Salisbury, to whom I communicated it, having received your Lordship's instructions that the Porte should be given to understand that they need expect no support from Her Majesty's Government should a rupture with Russia occur if it rejected the proposals to be made by the Powers in Conference, considered that it would be desirable for the fleet to go to Athens instead of remaining in Turkish waters, and I intimated his Lordship's wish to Admiral Drummond by the telegram, of which a copy is inclosed.

With a chance, however, of the Conference closing in a manner likely to cause much exasperation among the Turks towards foreigners, and especially towards Great Britain, I thought that, for the protection of Her Majesty's subjects, in case of need, two ships ought to remain at Besika, from whence they might be called up to Constantinople if required, one at Smyrna and one at Salonica.

The Marquis of Salisbury having asked whether I thought there would be any danger if the four ships did not go to the stations I had suggested till next Monday, I said that I saw none whatever, and I this morning sent the Admiral the further telegram as inclosed.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 10.

Vice-Admiral Sir J. Drummond to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.) *December* 23, 1876.

COMMUNICATION by telegraph not at present to be depended upon, owing to heavy sea. No communication with the shore can be relied on. Fleet must be coaled first week in January. It is my intention to proceed immediately to Salonica after the 26th. Please inform Lord Salisbury of this.

Inclosure 2 in No. 10.

Sir H. Elliot to Vice-Admiral Sir J. Drummond.

(Telegraphic.) *December* 24, 1876.

I HAVE communicated your telegram to Lord Salisbury, who considers it desirable that you should go to Athens instead of to Salonica.

Inclosure 3 in No. 10.

Sir H. Elliot to Vice-Admiral Sir J. Drummond.

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *December* 25, 1876.

ALTHOUGH Lord Salisbury wishes the fleet should now proceed to Athens, two ships should be back at Besika, one at Smyrna, and one at Salonica, next Monday, for protection of British subjects, in case of the Conference ending unsatisfactorily.

No. 11.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 1387.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 26, 1876.

THE Armenian Patriarch, who called upon me yesterday, spoke of serious misconduct of the Turkish troops at Van, where they appear to have pillaged the bazaars and shops during a fire.

The Governor-General of the Province, as usual in such cases, denies the correctness of the report, and declares the troops to have been instrumental in saving much property.

The Patriarch, however, while maintaining the fact of the misconduct of the troops, expresses himself as much satisfied with the measures taken by the Porte in regard to the occurrence.

A Commission, of which two out of the four members will be named by the Patriarch, is at once to investigate the circumstances.

The Patriarch is also much pleased with the nomination of Hassan Bey, of whom Mr. Consul Zohrab has recently reported very favourably as Governor-General of Diarbekir, which is raised to a vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 12.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 1386.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 26, 1876.

THE Porte has decided upon naming a Christian as Governor-General of the Archipelago, and the choice appears to have fallen upon Sulva Pasha, who was for two years Governor of one of the districts of Crete.

He is an able man of the Greek race, like the people of the islands he will have to administer, and a better selection could not be made.

The same cannot be said of Prince Aristarchi, at one time Prince of Samos, who is

appointed Governor of one of the districts, inhabited chiefly by Christians, in the Vilayet of Smyrna.

He was formerly very strongly supported by this Embassy and that of Austria, and, although he has had experience both at Samos and as Governor of a Cretan district, he inspires me with little confidence.

I am also informed that two Bulgarians, now in the service of the Porte, are selected as Governors of districts in Bulgaria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 13.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 1389.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 26, 1876.

IN consequence of Mr. Reade's report of the unsatisfactory manner in which the Commission under Ismail Bey was conducting the inquiry into Chefket Pasha's proceedings at Boyadjikeui, I made a strong representation to the Porte of the necessity of stringent orders being at once sent to Ismail Bey.

I am informed that a telegram in the sense I demanded was forwarded to him, directing him at the same time to inquire into the depredations of the Bashi-Bazouks under Chefket Pasha at Yamboli.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 14.

Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 264. Political.)
My Lord, *Ragusa, December* 24, 1876.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 258 of the 15th instant, respecting the mutilation of the Turkish soldiers by the Montenegrins, I have the honour to inclose copy of a note, dated the 21st instant, which I have received from the Prince of Montenegro, and of my reply thereto.

Your Lordship will see that His Highness wishes the testimony of the foreign officers present at his head-quarters during the campaign as to the behaviour of his troops; and I have already reported to your Lordship that Colonel Thömmel while at Cettigné entirely corroborated the Prince's statements on this head.

My own despatches written from Cettigné will have represented to Her Majesty's Government the humane treatment of the prisoners captured at Medun, and I feel sure that the concluding sentence in the note which His Highness has now sent me, and in which he expresses his determination to enforce upon his army the observance of the laws of humanity, declares an intention on the part of the Prince which he will do his utmost to prove to be no idle promise.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 14.

The Prince of Montenegro to Mr. Monson.

Cettigné, le $\frac{9}{21}$ *Décembre*, 1876.

M. le Consul-Général,

PAR votre lettre du 15 courant, vous me transmettez, de la part de sa Seigneurie, le Secrétaire d'Etat de Sa Majesté Britannique pour les Affaires Etrangères, des recommendations relatives à l'observation des devoirs de l'humanité vis-à-vis des ennemis, en prévision du cas où la guerre recommencerait entre le Monténégro et la Turquie.

Je vois avec plaisir que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine rend justice à mes sentiments personnels à cet égard, et vos propres rapports, Monsieur, ont dû certainement le confirmer dans cette impression. Vous avez pû voir par vous-même comment ont

traités nos prisonniers. Nous en avons en tout un millier environ qui ont été restaurés, soignés, vêtus même : puis mis en liberté. Vous avez pu comparer nos procédés avec ceux des Turcs, qui n'ont point fait de prisonniers, ou qui ne les ont conservés que quelques jours, pour les décapiter ensuite, ainsi qu'ont dû vous le rapporter certains de vos compatriotes, témoins oculaires de faits semblables au camp de Moukhtar Pasha.

Je regrette de ne trouver dans votre lettre aucune indication sur les cas spéciaux de cruauté qui ont été portés à la connaissance de l'Ambassadeur Anglais auprès de la Sublime Porte.

En l'absence de tous renseignements à cet égard, je dois présumer qu'il s'agit de certains blessés, dont il est fait mention dans tous les journaux, et qui ont été exhibés dans les hôpitaux de Constantinople, où ils avaient été transférés d'Albanie. Or, ces mêmes hommes, au nombre de sept, avaient été, sur l'invitation du Vali, visités dans les ambulances de Scutari par les Consuls Européens, qui ont constaté chez eux la mutilation du nez ; mais il n'a jamais été question alors de prisonniers empalés, et d'autres hachés vivants ou déchiquetés à coups de couteau ; toutes ces horreurs ont été ajoutées depuis que les blessés ont été transportés et exposés aux regards dans la capitale.

Certes, j'ai été indigné et irrité quand j'ai su que nos auxiliaires Kutchi avaient traité ainsi des soldats laissés pour morts sur le champ de bataille ; et j'ai donné les ordres les plus strictes pour que des faits semblables ne se reproduisissent pas. Dès le commencement de la guerre je n'ai négligé aucun moyen de faire renoncer nos populations aux mœurs barbares qu'elles avaient apprises de leurs adversaires eux-mêmes.

Ceux-ci ne m'ont pas rendu la tâche facile dans les dernières affaires, car dès le premier jour des hostilités actives, ils ont exposé sur le pont de Podgoritza les têtes de vingt-deux Monténégrins, décapités vivants ; et le Commandant en Chef Turc, en personne, a refusé de rendre ces sinistres trophées à quatre de nos femmes, qui ont eu le courage d'aller les lui réclamer pour les enterrer.

Ils ont, en outre, soumis le prêtre Grec Orthodox d'un de nos villages à un des supplices qu'ils nous accusent d'avoir employé ; ils l'ont dépecé vivant à coups de sabre.

Malgré cela, avec l'assistance de mes officiers, j'ai fait tout mon possible pour empêcher les représailles. Les nombreux étrangers, y compris les représentants de divers États, qui ont suivi mon quartier-général, peuvent dire à quel point j'ai réussi ; je m'en rapporte à eux.

En tout cas, et dans les moments les plus terribles d'une lutte à outrance de plusieurs siècles, jamais les Monténégrins ne se sont laissés entraîner par l'exemple de leurs ennemis, à exercer sur ceux-ci les horribles cruautés dont les journaux ont parlé.

Si donc c'est sur ces récits que se base le rapport de son Excellence Sir Henry Elliot, il est de mon devoir de déclarer que sa bonne foi a été surprise par des dépositions mises dans la bouche des blessés à Constantinople et auxquelles j'oppose le démenti le plus formel.

Dans le cas où il s'agirait d'autres faits, qui me sont inconnus, je compte sur votre bon vouloir, M. le Consul-Général, et sur les sentiments de justice du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté, pour qu'il m'en soit donné connaissance. Je tiens à pouvoir m'en enquérir positivement, afin de les punir, s'ils sont vrais, même en partie ; et que, s'ils sont faux, je puisse répondre aux calomnies.

Si, d'autre part, l'Ambassadeur Anglais n'a pas d'autres faits distincts à alléguer, je ne peux m'empêcher de regretter qu'il se soit laissé aller, sur des bases aussi erronées, à lancer une accusation générale si grave contre un petit peuple qui lutte depuis des générations, non seulement pour son existence, mais aussi pour se faire sa place dans la communauté des nations Chrétiennes.

Je vous prie, M. le Consul-Général, de vouloir bien porter ce qui précède à la connaissance de Lord Derby, et de l'assurer, de ma part, que je suis toujours déterminé à faire observer par mon armée les lois de l'humanité.

Je saisis, &c.
Le Prince de Monténégro,
(Signé) NICHOLAS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 14.

Mr. Monson to the Prince of Montenegro.

Ragusa, ce 24 Décembre, 1876.

Monseigneur,

JE m'empresse d'accuser réception de la lettre que votre Altesse a daigné m'adresser le 21 du courant, et dans laquelle elle a bien voulu me faire l'exposé des faits ayant rapport

à la mutilation des soldats Turcs, dont il a été question dans ma communication du 15 de ce mois.

Par le courrier de ce soir j'aurai soin de transmettre au Comte de Derby la copie de cette pièce, et je ne manquerai pas d'y ajouter—ce que du reste j'ai déjà signalé à sa Seigneurie à plusieurs reprises—que je suis à même de constater que les prisonniers Turcs, pendant leur détention en Monténégro, ont été traités avec une humanité et une générosité vraiment admirables.

Comme j'ai eu l'honneur de déclarer dans ma première lettre, le Gouvernement de la Reine rend pleine justice aux sentiments personnels de votre Altesse. Il agréera, j'en suis également convaincu, avec la plus vive satisfaction, les assurances que votre Altesse a eu la bonté de me réitérer, qu'elle est toujours déterminée à faire observer par son armée les lois de l'humanité.

Je prie, &c.
(Signé) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 15.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 901. Confidential.)

Vienna, December 28, 1876.

My Lord,

COUNT CAROLYI, the Austrian Ambassador at Berlin, arrived here two days ago and will, I understand, leave again this evening for his post. Lord Odo Russell has reason to believe that he was summoned here by the Emperor, whereas, it is said here that he came to Vienna with a message from the Emperor of Germany. However this may be, his presence is naturally connected by the public with a Council, which takes place to-day at the Palace under the presidency of the Emperor, who has arrived from Pesth for the purpose, and which will be attended by Count Andrassy and the Ministers of Finance and War of the Monarchy, and by the Prime Ministers and Finance Ministers of Austria and of Hungary.

The expected arrival at Vienna this evening of General Rodich may also be connected with the questions to be discussed at the Council ; among which, telegrams from Pesth in the Vienna papers of to-day consider that those pending between Austria and Hungary will not be included.

Rumours have lately been in circulation of a considerable force having been prepared for active service, but from what I learn to-day, they do not seem to be well founded, and it would appear that nothing has, as yet, been done with a view to the entrance of Austro-Hungarian troops into Bosnia and the Herzegovina, beyond the establishment of magazines on the frontiers, and more particularly at Spalato, where, I am told, that everything is readiness which an army entering the Turkish provinces would be likely to require.

I ought to add, with reference to Count Carolyi's presence here, that, in answer to my inquiries at the Foreign Office as to its object, I have been assured that it was arranged some weeks ago that he should have a fortnight's leave at Christmas, a statement which, if true, considering the shortness of his stay, will hardly account for it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN

No. 16.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 904. Confidential.)

Vienna, December 29, 1876.

My Lord,

COUNT ANDRASSY, whom I saw this morning, appears to be far from satisfied with the state of affairs at Constantinople. His last telegrams, however, merely report Lord Salisbury's audience of the Sultan, and the minatory attitude which had been assumed by the Plenipotentiaries, of the expediency of which he evidently entertains doubts, although he has assented to it.

He considers Russia to be now as anxious for peace as she was apparently some weeks ago for war, and he is, therefore, of opinion that she will be satisfied if the reforms recommended by the Conference are accepted by the Porte as the basis of an arrangement ; but he fears that the difficulty of the situation will not have been entirely overcome even

if the Turkish Government consent to all that has been asked of them, as he does not see how the proposals of the Conference are to be carried out, or the next steps which are to be taken.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 17.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 905.)
My Lord, *Vienna, December 29, 1876.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 901 of yesterday's date, marked Confidential, the "Political Correspondenz," an unofficial organ of the Government, states that the Ministerial Council, over which the Emperor presided yesterday, was exclusively occupied with current affairs, and that the sensational statements in the press, and the alarming reports with respect to it, were entirely unfounded.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 18.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 567. Very Confidential.)
My Lord, *Berlin, December 27, 1876.*

PRINCE BISMARCK read to me to-day an extract of a report from the German Ambassador in London of the 20th instant, stating that your Lordship had told him that Her Majesty's Government could not exercise any special pressure on the Turkish Government to compel them to accept the advice of the Conference if they were unwilling to do so.

His Highness then showed me an autograph letter from the Emperor, in which His Majesty expressed the regret he felt at the information conveyed in Count Münster's despatch, and requested Prince Bismarck to call upon me and beg of me to tell your Lordship confidentially from His Majesty that he feared the Turks would be encouraged to resist if the Six Powers did not exercise an equal pressure on the Porte to enforce the acceptance of the measures they had agreed upon in Conference.

Resistance on the part of Turkey would lead to war with Russia—a contingency His Majesty would deeply regret, and which he could not but think might be prevented by an equal and unanimous pressure on the part of the Guaranteeing Powers in Conference assembled to compel the Porte to keep the peace, and carry out their recommendations without further hesitation or delay.

Prince Bismarck said that, in obeying the Emperor's commands, he refrained from any comment of his own, as he felt sure that Her Majesty's Government would do all in their power to enforce the advice of the Conference in the interest of peace.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 19.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 568. Secret.)
My Lord, *Berlin, December 27, 1876.*

IN the course of a conversation I had this morning with Prince Bismarck on Turkish Affairs his Highness observed that he had raised no objection to the proposals agreed upon in Conference at Constantinople by the Representatives of the Guaranteeing Powers, so as not to impede their labours, but that, in his own private opinion, there were some points he failed to appreciate. For instance, the employment of Belgians to enforce the decisions of the Conference appeared to him rather a dangerous experiment if attempted at all, and not unlikely in principle to increase the difficulty of prevailing upon the Porte to accept the whole scheme of reform submitted to them.

He could not, of course, ask the German Parliament to vote money for the maintenance of a Belgian police in Turkey, but since some doubt was still admissible as to the measure being practically carried out, he would say no more for the present on the subject. He suspected that the original first suggestion had been made to England by the King of the Belgians, who naturally wished to increase the importance of Belgium in Europe.

I said I had received no positive information on the subject, but that I believed the idea to have been suggested by General Ignatiew.

Prince Bismarck replied that, to the best of his knowledge, it came from England, and he then read me a report from the German Ambassador at St. Petersburgh, stating that the Czar had just announced a new proposal to him made by England, to employ Belgians, which his Majesty was willing to assent to, since Her Majesty's Government, who recommended the measure, thought it would be found generally acceptable under existing difficulties.

Another point Prince Bismarck said he did not appreciate was the withdrawal of the Embassies in the event of the refusal on the part of Turkey to act on the advice of the Powers.

It was natural Russia should withdraw her Embassy, because Russia wished to fight Turkey, but Germany did not, and there were German subjects and German interests that required the presence and protection of accredited Agents in the East.

It was easy enough to break off relations with another country, but often difficult to renew them, so he had agreed to instruct the German Ambassador to come to Berlin on leave of absence, but he would not recall the German Embassy altogether.

His Highness then asked what Her Majesty's Government had decided to do in the event of the Porte's refusal.

I said that I was not yet in possession of any details respecting the negotiations at Constantinople, nor did I know how Her Majesty's Government intended to meet a possible refusal on the part of the Turkish Government to accept the advice of the Conference; but since we were friends, and not enemies, and had considerable British interests to protect in Turkey, I felt justified in assuming that a Chargé d'Affaires would remain in charge of Her Majesty's Embassy if the Ambassador should solicit or be granted leave of absence after the Conference.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 20.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 560. Secret.)
My Lord, *Berlin, December 27, 1876.*

PRINCE BISMARCK told me to-day that he greatly regretted to find that he had failed in his endeavours to interest the Marquis of Salisbury in the fate and welfare of Austria.

He gathered from the latest reports that his Lordship had negotiated principally with General Ignatiew, and had paid less attention to Count Zichy, which had produced at Vienna mixed feelings of regret, disappointment, isolation, and envy.

The immediate result was a struggle on the part of the Austrian Government to establish relations with Russia as cordial as those of England, and on the part of the Russian Government to take advantage of the weakness and isolation of Austria, and assume a dictatorial tone, which was more likely to do harm than good in the future.

He (Prince Bismarck) was the first to rejoice at the existence of cordial and intimate relations between England and Russia, and he would deeply regret to see those relations become less friendly than they are, but at the same time he anxiously desired that Austria should come in for a share of England's good-will and moral support, and be on equal terms of friendship with England, Russia, and Germany.

The moral support and friendly interest of England would go far to regulate and equilize the relations between Austria and Russia, and would help to postpone the grave consequences to which a quarrel between those two Powers might sooner or later give rise.

A quarrel between them might lead to the resignation of Count Andrassy, and a change of Government to a change of policy.

Ministers were not wanting in Austria ready to join Turkey in declaring war to Russia, a calamity Germany would do her utmost to prevent; and he most ardently

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desired to see the influence of England exerted to promote those friendly relations between Austria and Russia that were so essential to the maintenance of peace in Europe.

He had perfect confidence in Count Andrassy's policy, and he sincerely hoped Her Majesty's Government would give him what moral support they could, so as to postpone a change of Government if a crisis should occur in Austria.

I asked Prince Bismarck whether he thought Russia equal to a conflict with the combined armies of Turkey and Austria.

"Certainly not," his Highness replied, "Russia would find it hard enough to fight Turkey single-handed."

The Russian army was ill prepared for invasion, while the Turkish army was in excellent condition for defence.

In reply to some further questions of mine, Prince Bismarck said that the war party in Russia consisted of women and priests, led by the Empress and encouraged by Prince Gortchakow, who wished to end his career with a flourish, whilst the peace party in Russia was composed of the army, at the head of which was the Czar.

The policy of Livadia had proved to be as different from the policy of St. Petersburgh as night and day.

However, notwithstanding the distressing disclosures brought to light by the mobilization of the army, the Czar had been led on too far to retrace his steps entirely, and if the Turks rejected the advice of the Conference he could not well avoid a warlike demonstration.

It would be imprudent to attempt to cross the Danube in winter, except, perhaps, to establish communications with Belgrade, but the Pruth could always be crossed, and winter quarters taken up in Roumania.

I asked how Prince Charles of Roumania would receive the Russian invaders.

Prince Bismarck said that Prince Charles could not do otherwise than receive them well, but that he had shown so little aptitude for administration that his position was precarious, and if he could not maintain himself Germany could give him no support, having no real or national interest in keeping him there. Happily Prince Charles' father was rich enough to provide for him if he should be compelled to retire into private life again.

After some further conversation, of no immediate interest, Prince Bismarck repeated that he was heartily glad that England, Russia, and Germany were so cordially united, and that he hoped her Majesty's Government would also share the deep interest he felt in the welfare, safety, and maintenance of the Austrian Empire.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 21.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 571. Secret.) *Berlin, December 29, 1876.*

My Lord,

I HAVE been secretly informed, but I cannot vouch for the report, that the Austrian Ambassador's journey to Vienna is connected with a secret inquiry on the part of Count Andrassy as to whether he could reckon on German support in the event of Austria being compelled, in her own interest, to take the part of Turkey against Russia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 22.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 572.) *Berlin, December 29, 1876.*

My Lord,

IN my despatch No. 521 of the 24th of November, I mentioned that the Turkish Ambassador, Edhem Pasha's, applications for audiences of the Emperor and of the Chancellor before leaving Berlin for Constantinople, had not been granted, to his surprise and regret. The Emperor was leaving that day for Hanover and the Chancellor was arriving from Varzin.

Prince Bismarck having told me incidentally that the report was unfounded, and that

he would have had much pleasure in receiving Edhem Pasha if his Excellency had applied for an audience, I hasten to rectify the statement made in my above-mentioned despatch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 23.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 573. Very Confidential.) *Berlin, December 29, 1876.*

My Lord,

THE information sent by the German Ambassador on the 20th instant to Berlin, that Her Majesty's Government would not exercise any special pressure on the Turkish Government to compel them to accept the advice of the Conference, if they were unwilling to do so, mentioned in my despatch No. 567, Very Confidential, of the 27th instant, has also been received from Paris.

The Marquis d'Harcourt writes in the same sense as Count Münster to his Government, but while the German Ambassador uses the word "pressure," the French Ambassador uses the word "coercion," in reporting the conversations with your Lordship, in which the subject was discussed.

The attitude of Her Majesty's Government is, I believe, perfectly well understood by the German Government; but the German Emperor appears to have thought that if the Porte refused to act on the advice of the Conference, the six Powers would recall their Representatives simultaneously; indeed, Dr. Busch, Chief of the Oriental Department in the Foreign Office, has already left Berlin to take charge of the Embassy when Baron Werther leaves Constantinople.

I have been confidentially assured that the German Emperor thinks so ill of the Russian army that he fears war would be disastrous to Russia, and give the Sultan an easy victory over his nephew the Czar, and that that is the reason for which His Majesty is now more than ever anxious that peace should be preserved.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 24.

Mr. Lumley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 153.) *Brussels, December 31, 1876.*

My Lord,

WITH the exception of the Russian organ the "Nord," published at Brussels, the only Belgian paper which has come under my notice in which the suggestion for the occupation of Bulgaria by Belgian troops is advocated is the Liberal paper "L'Opinion," of Antwerp, which, in the Article herewith inclosed, considers that the proposition involves no danger for Belgium, and urges the Belgian Government to seize the opportunity, should it be offered by all the Powers, of proving that the existence of Belgium as a neutral State is necessary for the whole of Europe.

The "Indépendance Belge" of the 28th instant, in an Article, which I have also the honour to inclose, replying to the "Opinion," says that, even supposing that there is no question of sending a division of the Belgian army to Bulgaria, the suggested authorization for Belgian volunteers to serve as gendarmes in Turkish uniform, without in any way engaging the responsibility of the Belgian Government, would still be open to serious objections, even should the arrangement take place with the consent of the Porte.

"Suppose, for instance, that the Mussulman population objecting to the presence of a foreign force on Turkish territory should break into insurrection in different parts of the extensive Province of Bulgaria, the precise limits of which are as yet undefined, could the Porte guarantee the safety of the 6,000 Belgians disseminated throughout that vast territory? If not, is it not likely that the Austrians and Russians on the frontier would allow the massacre of the Belgians who had come there to maintain peace in the name of Europe, and they would probably enter the revolted Province to come to their assistance.

"But the Porte, though consenting to the occupation of part of its territory by neutral troops, might object to the interference of another Power, and the presence of the

Russians in Bulgaria might be the signal for the war which all are anxious to avoid, and, under these conditions, how could the Belgian force help joining the Russian army, and, in that case, what would become of Belgian neutrality? And even suppose that no insurrection should break out, who can say, in this intricate Eastern question, how long the Powers would agree among themselves? Who would venture to affirm that the war, staved off by the intervention of Belgian troops in Bulgaria is anything but adjourned? Would not peace in such a dispute be at the mercy of an unexpected incident, and, should it occur and produce war, would Belgium take part in it; and, if so, what becomes of her neutrality? Or would she immediately recall her troops, who were merely sent out for show, at the first cannon-shot? What regiment of the Belgian army would consent to play such a part? In fact, the only choice for our soldiers would be that of becoming belligerents or ridiculous; and in this the "Opinion" sees no danger for Belgium! But the question is no longer put forward in this shape, and let us hope that it may not be put forward at all."

The "Nord," in reply to these objections, stated that, in the event of the idea of the Belgian occupation prevailing with the consent of all the parties concerned, it is evident that all the details would be strictly regulated by an International Convention, but that if the state of affairs changed, the Convention would be modified in accordance with these fresh circumstances, with the consent of all the Contracting Parties, and that the precedent of the occupation of the Lebanon in 1860, when Mahommedan fanaticism was at least as much excited as now, would suffice to show the exaggerations of the fears that had been expressed in the Belgian Press.

The "Indépendance Belge" observes in reply that "the 'Nord' still speaks of a Belgian occupation of Bulgaria, not of a mere force of gendarmes or police serving as escort to the Commissioners, and that although such an occupation might be rigorously determined by an International Convention, it could only be so at the price of annulling the Treaties which proclaim the perpetual neutrality of Belgium. The first condition of such a Convention would of course be that in the event of war breaking out between Turkey or one or more of the Powers, the Belgian troops should be immediately recalled, thus creating a situation of the most humiliating character which the army could not accept.

"However minute the details of such a Convention may be, it is possible to conceive that unforeseen incidents might occur which would prevent the recall of the Belgian troops: in the event, for instance, of the presupposed massacre can it be supposed that instead of sending reinforcements to support her troops Belgium would recall them and leave to other Powers the task of avenging them? It is evident that in such an eventuality Belgium would find herself engaged in war, and who can say that it would be a war with Turkey alone (which of itself would be an infraction of our neutrality)? Might it not degenerate into a conflict between several of the Powers guaranteeing that neutrality? It would not be the first time that States who were allies at the commencement of a conflict became enemies at the end of it.

"But," says the "Nord," "nothing of this kind is to be feared, and it points as a precedent to the occupation of the Lebanon in 1860 by French troops. There is, however, no analogy between that occupation and the one proposed for Belgium. France being a powerful State, and not a neutral nation, had the right and the means of carrying on war in distant countries; but Belgium has neither this right nor this power. She is in the first place neutral, and, from a military point of view, she has only the force sufficient for the defence of her territory. Let her then reserve her whole force for that noble object, which is at the same time her duty and her interest.

"We are happy, however, to be able to repeat that she is not likely to be placed in the predicament of being found wanting for one or the other, for it appears that there is no longer any question of a Belgian occupation of Bulgaria.

"It is, indeed, doubtful that any such measures were ever proposed, and it is, therefore, useless to continue a discussion which could only have a theoretical importance."

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. SAVILE LUMLEY.

No. 25.

Mr. Lumley to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 1, 1877.)

(No. 134.)

Brussels, December 31, 1876.

My Lord,

THE "Nord," in a late article, states that the country whose King has taken the initiative in an association for the suppression of slavery was especially indicated to take a part in a work of order and civilization in Turkey, which, like Egypt, was one of the principal markets of the Slave Trade, and that the King of the Belgians would remain, as it were, in the field of action he had selected by sending his troops to accomplish the work of civilization and liberation in the Balkans. This, in fact, is a task to which the troops of neutral States are peculiarly adapted, since it is only rational that military forces which are not applicable to war should be employed in the service of international order and pacification.

Such services, indeed, which would not be without use in times of crises and disturbance, would entitle neutral States to the gratitude and consideration of Europe.

To this argument the "Etoile Belge," in an article, copy of which I have the honour to inclose, replies by calling to mind what occurred at the commencement of the Franco-German war of 1870, when the French and German Emperors asked King Leopold whether he was able to maintain his neutrality and defend his frontiers.

Fortunately the Belgian Government was able to reply in the affirmative; but what would have happened had the King been obliged to reply to the question, that although he had a corps of troops employed in international service in the Balkans or elsewhere, he would endeavour to perform his duty without it. It should not be forgotten that Marshal MacMahon declared, before a Committee of the National Assembly, that if he had retained the command of the army at Sedan, he should, in case of defeat, have retreated to Belgium; and it should equally be borne in mind that had the French troops entered Belgium without being disarmed, orders had been given by Marshal Moltke and the Princes Royal of Prussia and of Saxony to pursue the French on Belgian territory.

The precedent of 1870 shows clearly what is the duty of a neutral Power, and should serve as a warning to us.

Neutral Powers have in reality no other means of acquiring claims on the gratitude and consideration of the Powers guaranteeing their position than that of maintaining it, as we were happily able to do in 1870, and those who would induce us to place our troops at the disposal of others when it is proved by experience that we have so much want of them at home, deceive themselves as to what is our true interest, or fulfil a duty which cannot be reconciled with a due understanding of that interest.

With reference to a statement that the "Nord," that the Belgian Government had not as yet definitely refused to send troops to Bulgaria, the semi-official "Journal de Bruxelles" explained that no proposition on the subject had as yet been addressed to Belgium.

"After the preceding article," says the writer in the "Etoile Belge," "it is needless to add that we sincerely hope that no such proposition will reach Brussels."

In reply to the assertion contained in a letter of the Berlin correspondent of the "Indépendance Belge," copy of which was inclosed in my despatch No. 124 of the 16th instant, that neither the King nor the Chambers had the right of employing Belgian troops for the occupation of a foreign territory, a member of the Constituent Assembly of 1830-31, in a letter addressed to the "Journal de Bruxelles," herewith inclosed, explains that this assertion is erroneous, since there is nothing in the political organization of Belgium which would prevent her from participating in the way suggested in the settlement of the Oriental question, so important to Christianity.

There is nothing in the Belgian Constitution to prevent the intervention of a Belgian army in the East, and an ordinary law is all that would be required for the purpose of regulating that intervention.

Nor is there anything in the public obligations of Belgium as regards her neutrality which would prevent her occupying Bulgaria in the service of Europe, with the consent of all the Powers, Turkey included.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. SAVILE LUMLEY.

No. 26.

Mr. Lumley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 135. Confidential.)
Brussels, December 31, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAD a visit two days ago from Glavany Bey, the late Turkish Chargé d'Affaires at Brussels (a post he held for twenty-five years), with whom I had been on intimate terms.

He said he came as an old friend to communicate to me confidentially a report that had reached him from his friends at Constantinople to the effect that in the event of the establishment of an International Commission to watch over the reforms to be carried out in the Christian provinces of Turkey, and of the appointment of a Christian Governor for Bulgaria, there was some prospect of his being selected for that post.

Glavany Bey said he considered this to be merely an amiable calculation on the part of his friends, but that in reality there would no doubt be considerable difficulty in finding a Christian Governor for that province, as well as for Bosnia and Herzegovina, combining the qualifications which would be required by the Porte and by the Powers; he only knew of one besides himself of that category, namely, Blacque Bey, who was an Englishman. With regard to himself there was one favourable peculiarity,—although of Greek religion, his family were not Greek, but of Servian extraction, as was evident from his name, "Glava" being the Servian for head.

Should he however be appointed to that post, Glavany Bey said that one of his principal objects would be to attract as much as possible the Belgian element to Bulgaria, for which, owing to his family connections, his wife being a Belgian lady, and his daughter having married a Belgian, he had peculiar facilities, and these he should employ with the view of inducing several Belgian magistrates to offer their services to the Porte; without putting himself forward, he had a great deal to do with the selection of the Belgian Judges now in Egypt, and he was convinced he could find equally good men to go out to Turkey.

Another object he should endeavour to obtain would be the appointment of Indian officers to the Turkish troops in Bulgaria, with whose aid he had not the least doubt he should be able to keep perfect order; as he understood from what he could gather from the papers, the Governors of the provinces in question would be under the direction of the International Commission, and he could only say that he would carry their instructions to the letter; this he could only do however, provided there was no Turkish official placed over him, for in the event of the appointment of a Mahommedan Governor-General over each, or over all the three provinces, nothing would induce him to accept that office.

Glavany Bey, who is a man of most conciliatory manners, and a gentleman in every respect, said that under the above conditions he should not be afraid of undertaking the responsibilities of the important post of Governor of Bulgaria, or of either of the other provinces, if the state of his health, which has not been good for some time past, would permit him to do so.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. SAVILE LUMLEY.

No. 27.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, January 1, 1877, 4·30 P.M.*

GENERAL IGNATIEW has proposed signature by Plenipotentiaries of an act of which the following is operative clause:—

Plenipotentiaries declare that propositions laid before the Porte have been deliberated in common, and that they contained the essential basis of the arrangements to be concluded with the Porte. They all engage, consequently, to sustain them in Conference and to support them "auprès de la Porte." To give an evident proof of the union of their Governments which should contribute powerfully to the maintenance of peace, the Plenipotentiaries have signed this Act.

Lord Salisbury asks to be authorized to sign, provided the Austrian Representative does so. I have great doubts. Ascertain what action of Austro-Hungarian Government will be.

No. 28.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 2.) *Foreign Office, January 1, 1877.*

Sir,

IT has been proposed by General Ignatiew that the Plenipotentiaries of the six Powers, who attended the Preliminary Conference at Constantinople, should sign an act of which the following is the operative clause:—

"Plenipotentiaries declare that propositions laid before the Porte have been deliberated in common, and that they contained the essential bases of the arrangements to be concluded with the Porte. They all engage, consequently, to sustain them in Conference, and to support them 'auprés de la Porte,' to give an evident proof of the union of their Governments which should cultivate powerfully to the maintainance of peace, the Plenipotentiaries have signed this Act."

Lord Salisbury has requested that he may be furnished with authority to sign this act, provided that the Austrian Plenipotentiary is authorized to sign. I have great doubts on the subject, and should wish your Excellency to ascertain and report to me what course the Austro-Hungarian Government are disposed to adopt.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 29.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 1. Confidential.) *Foreign Office, January 1, 1877.*

My Lord,

COUNT SCHOUVALOFF called upon me this afternoon, and read to me a telegraphic message which he had received from Prince Gortchakow.

General Ignatiew, Prince Gortchakow says, telegraphed yesterday to explain that the Protocol which it is proposed that the Plenipotentiaries of the Six Powers should sign is only a *procès-verbal* for the purpose of putting on record the agreement which exists as to the bases decided on, but that it leaves the door open for any modifications on which the Plenipotentiaries may agree.

Such a Protocol would, by its nature, counteract the intrigues now being carried on at Constantinople for the purpose of producing an impression that the apparent understanding between the Powers does not really exist, and that Russia is likely to detach herself from the rest, in order to come to a direct arrangement with Turkey.

Prince Gortchakow goes on to say that it was England which took the initiative as regards the meeting of the Conference; that the Turks have replied to the proposals of Europe by counter-projects, which are absurd, and inconsistent with the bases proposed by England, and with previous engagements; that the dignity of Europe is compromised; and that we are rapidly approaching a rupture of relations.

Prince Gortchakow urges the necessity of our taking a firm and energetic attitude, which, he says, is the only means of averting eventual war.

I thanked Count Schouvaloff for his communication, but did not think it necessary to make any observation on the views put forward in it.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 30.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Kirby Green.

(No. 1.) *Foreign Office, January 1, 1877.*

Sir,

HER Majesty's Government approve the advice which you gave to Dervish Pasha, to endeavour to avoid a collision with the Montenegrins, as reported in your despatch No. 89 of the 15th December, 1876.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 31.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January 2, 1877.*)

(No. 907. Confidential.)
Vienna, December 30, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship the copy of a private letter which I have received from Mr. James Long, charged with the administration of a fund subscribed in England for the relief and assistance of houseless Bulgarians.

The inclosures may interest your Lordship, as showing the success with which Mr. Long has carried out the object of his mission, and the assistance which he has received from the Turkish authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Inclosure in No. 31.

Mr. Long to Sir A. Buchanan.

Tatar Bazardjik, le 20 Décembre, 1876.

Monsieur,

J'AI l'honneur de vous informer que je suis actuellement parmi les Bulgares très-occupé à la construction d'abris en bois, destinés à protéger contre les rigueurs de l'hiver les malheureux qui ont perdu leurs habitations pendant la dernière insurrection.

Mon centre actuel d'opérations est établi à Tatar-Bazardjik, entre Philippopoli et les Balkans, et à quelques 500 kilomètres de Constantinople.

J'ai achevé mes constructions dans trois villages, et j'espère avant la fin de l'année avoir 200 maisons et sept écoles bien terminées.

Je me suis approvisionné des bois nécessaires à mon œuvre à la forêt de Belowa, qui se trouve à la tête de la ligne du chemin de fer établi de Constantinople dans ces contrées.

J'ai en outre installé dans cette forêt une scierie à vapeur, que j'ai fait venir de France, et qui me rend de grands services en façonnant rapidement les bois que j'emplois à mes constructions. La compagnie du chemin de fer s'est montrée très-bien disposée en ma faveur, et m'accordé le transport gratuit de tout mon matériel.

Je n'ai eu qu'à me louer de l'appui que les autorités Turques ont bien voulu me prêter. Elles m'ont donné avec beaucoup d'obligeance les renseignements dont j'avais besoin, et se sont montrées prêtes à me rendre service en toutes circonstances.

Je vais recevoir prochainement d'Angleterre des envois assez considérables de couvertures en laine, de drap, et de vêtements confectionnés. Je ne doute pas que les couvertures seront de la plus grande utilité aux Bulgares, mais j'ai peur que les vêtements confectionnés ne conviennent guère à ce peuple encore peu civilisé.

J'ai, &c.
(Signé) JAMES LONG.

No. 32.

Memorandum communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Münster, January 2, 1877.

THE general state of the Administration in Turkey and the way in which the troops have been recruited have caused great excitement and irritation amongst the Mahommedan population of Syria and Palestine.

This irritation is directed against all European settlers in general, as they are all more or less held responsible for the troubles in Turkey.

The German Colonies in Palestine, in the neighbourhood of Jaffa, Kaiffa, and Beirut, who were on the very best terms with the Mahommedan population, begin greatly to suffer, and life and property are more or less in danger.

The German Government have anxiously avoided any interference in the affairs of Turkey, but it might become a duty to protect the German subjects living in those parts.

The German Ambassador has been instructed to draw the attention of the Turkish Government on those facts, and to express the firm expectation that the Porte will

immediately take the most effective measures in order to prevent such excesses of the Turkish population.

The German Government would feel very grateful if Her Majesty's Ambassador could be instructed to support the demonstrations of his German colleague.

No. 33.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January 2.*)

Vienna, January 2, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

AS the act referred to in your Lordship's telegram of yesterday declares what has been already notified to the Porte, Count Andrassy does not clearly understand its object. He has received no report respecting it from Count Zichy, and until he does so he cannot express a positive opinion as to expediency of signing the proposed instrument. He thinks, however, it might be signed without danger or inconvenience if, after the word "peace" a clause were added stating "it is, however, understood that it shall be open to the Porte to propose modifications in the details and as to the manner of carrying out the views of the Powers." Without a clause of this kind to show that the proposals made to the Porte shall be subject to discussion, he said that the Conference would be a useless formality. When he hears from Count Zichy he will instruct him to communicate with Lord Salisbury in order that they may arrange such common action on the subject as their respective instructions may point out.

No. 34.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January 2.*)

Rome, January 2, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

THE suggestion said to have originated in a conversation between Count Chaudordy and General Ignatiew that the Conference should assemble elsewhere in the event of the Turkish Government definitively declining discussion of programme by Conference and adhering to their own finds favour here.

It is thought that if the Representatives of the Powers are withdrawn and Turkey is lest tête-à-tête with Russia, two dangers are to be apprehended :—

1. The Porte, unfettered any longer by diplomatic control, may appeal to religious feelings of its subjects, and the result may be an ebullition of fanaticism in different parts of the country hitherto undisturbed, but where the position of the Christians is precarious.

2. If Russia does not feel herself sufficiently strong to undertake the campaign alone she may possibly propose territorial advantages to Austria in order to receive her co-operation, thus entailing a participation of European Turkey by those two Powers with the sanction of Germany.

Should the suggestion above referred to be followed and an Italian town be selected as the new place of meeting, the Italian Government would be flattered at the choice.

I telegraph this at request of Count Tornielli, though instructions in above sense have been sent to General Menabrea.

No. 35.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.

Foreign Office, January 2, 1877.

(No. 4.)

My Lord,

THE French Ambassador called upon me this afternoon to know what I had heard as to the proceedings of the Conference, and to see whether his reports agreed with mine, which they did in every detail. His Excellency went on to express an opinion, which I understood to be that of his Government, to the effect that the absolute and peremptory rejection by the Porte of the proposals of the Powers, which appeared to be inevitable, constituted an insult to Europe, which it would be impossible to pass over. He thought the Powers ought now to consider whether some further step shall not be taken, as a mere withdrawal of Ambassadors seemed hardly adequate to meet the requirements of the situation.

I said that Her Majesty's Government had from the first laid down the course which they intended to adopt in the event of a refusal, which I have always regarded as not improbable, and that I saw no reason, as at present advised, to depart from the policy already announced.

His Excellency proceeded to dwell upon the danger of a war once declared between Russia and Turkey extending to other Powers, and on the possibility of England becoming, however unwillingly, involved in it.

I told his Excellency that, so long ago as last summer, I had warned Musurus Pasha that the Porte must not expect material assistance from England in the event of a Russian war, and if we had held that language then, much more should we do so now, when the Porte by refusing English advice had forfeited even such claim to English help as it might be previously supposed to possess. On the other hand, I could not, I said, hold out any expectation to the French Government that we should join in measures of coercion against Turkey; and such being the case, we could not directly or indirectly use menaces which we did not intend to carry into execution.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 35*.

Consul Barker to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 3, 1877.)

(No. 40. Political.)
Canea, Crete, December 16, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship a copy of a despatch which I have this day addressed to his Excellency Sir Henry Elliot, reporting details on the present working of the "Organic Law" in Crete, and describing the dissatisfaction manifested by the Christian inhabitants with the actual Government in the island, as so also in some measure by the Mahommedans.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

Inclosure in No. 35*.

Consul Barker to Sir H. Elliot.

Canea, Crete, December 16, 1876.

Sir,

AT this moment that the Powers are in Conference at the capital, and about to decide the question of the Christian populations in the northern provinces of Turkey, your Excellency may perhaps wish to know how the Organic Laws have been working in Crete since their establishment.

The following is the actual state of things:—

As I had the honour to report to your Excellency in my last despatch of the 4th instant, all the inhabitants in this island, but more particularly the Christians, are much dissatisfied with the Tribunals, and with the acts of his Excellency the Governor-General, whose Government does not enforce payment of debts, and this causes a complete stagnation in trade and in business of every kind. But in reality his Excellency is not entirely to blame; the antagonism existing between the two rival creeds, and the violent hatred openly manifested to one another by both parties, prevent the proper working of the Tribunals and the impartial administration of justice, and the Organic Law has become a dead letter.

Without entering into the circumstances which during the last eight years have gradually led to this state of things, I may briefly say that the actual Government in this island is virtually that of the Sultan, independent of any other, warily administered at this moment in a vacillating manner by Réouf Pasha, who happens to be a well-disposed man; but there is no union among the inhabitants, no wish to work together for general interests, no bearing and forbearing, and from one moment to another, at any time, an insurrection of the Christians may be expected if external political causes arise to ignite the sparks always ready to create a conflagration.

And yet there never could be better Regulations (upon paper) than those embodied in the Organic Law, none which would appear to ensure a just and impartial administration, and one calculated to satisfy every class and creed; but the animus to put them into

execution is wanting. Violent religious fanaticism on both sides (whose only thought is how to crush one another) has shipwrecked the good intentions of the Powers who engaged the Porte to grant this concession to Crete. The Christians are still dissatisfied, and so also in some measure are the Mahommedans, which renders particularly necessary the garrisoning of the 150 block-houses which have been built in every part of the island during the last insurrection, and the maintenance in complete working order of the system of signals established, exclusive of the telegraph.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

P.S.—In proof of what I have said I have the honour to report that the British Consular Agent at Rettimo, M. Tréfélli, has had in hand three sentences from the Tribunal condemning three Turks to pay sums of money on regular bonds, and he has not been able for the last two years to obtain payment.

E. B. B. B.

No. 36.

Acting Consul Freeman to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 3, 1877.)

(No. 64. Political.)
Bosna-Serai, December 21, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that the town of Nichsich has been re victualled, with the consent and assistance of Montenegro for two months by way of Gatzo and the Duga Pass, the convoys being escorted from Christach by Montenegrin troops.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. B. FREEMAN.

No. 37.

Acting Consul Freeman to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 3, 1877.)

(No. 65. Political.)
Bosna-Serai, December 21, 1876.

My Lord,

THE idea having latterly again become prevalent here that an occupation of these provinces by Austria is probable and even imminent, I think it my duty to inform your Lordship what impression this prospect appears to make on the various component parts of the population. The Catholics, it is well known, would view such an occupation with the greatest satisfaction, but the Orthodox population, although they would undoubtedly offer no opposition, are not altogether pleased at the prospect of being subjected to Austrian domination, as they consider it would be a fatal blow to the realization of all Panslavistic aspirations. The more important question, however, is the effect such an occupation would produce on the Mussulman element. I have conversed on the subject with some of the leading and most influential Mahommedans of the place, and their opinion seems to be that the native Mussulmans, who are thoroughly disheartened, would of their own initiative, offer no opposition, nor create any disturbance; but at the same time, they said that they are a people so easily led, and by nature and habit so obedient to all constituted authority, that should they be instigated to it by their Government, they might probably offer very considerable resistance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. B. FREEMAN.

No. 38.

*Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.**—(*Received January* 3, 4·10 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)
Constantinople, January 3, 1877, 1·10 P.M.

MIDHAT PASHA stated yesterday to Mr. Sanderson that the meeting of foreign Representatives at Constantinople was a fortunate event for Turkey, which had hitherto

* Repeated confidentially to Embassies.

placed strict reliance on maintenance of Treaty of Paris, but now opened her eyes to fact that it no longer exists.

Left thus to deal with Russia single-handed, she must trust to fate or throw herself into the arms of that Power, as perhaps the safest course now left open to her.

He would, however, be the last man in the Empire to advocate latter alternative, as repulsive to his own feelings and to desire that his country should continue to follow its traditional policy of reliance on Western Powers.

He still hoped that there yet would be some change in public opinion in England and that people would awaken to the injustice of sacrificing the interests of a whole Empire to Parliamentary considerations.

His Highness concluded by stating that General Ignatiew had intimated that nothing could be easier than for Russia to come to an understanding with Turkey, but that it was not possible for him to state in writing terms on which this could be effected as long as he was obliged to act in concert with his colleagues at the Conference.

No. 39.

Acting Consul Cumberbatch to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 3, 6·15 P.M.)

Belgrade, January 3, 1877, 3 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

IN consequence of prolongation of armistice, great many Russian officers and men still in the Servian army have given in their resignation, and will leave in regular companies, it is reported, to Bessarabia.

No. 40.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.[a]—(*Received January* 3.)

Bucharest, January 3, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

GOVERNMENT of Roumania protest against Roumania being called a privileged province and Roumanians termed Ottoman subjects in the Turkish Constitution.

Unless answer be favourable, next tribute may be refused.

No. 41.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.

(No. 5.)

Foreign Office, January 3, 1877.

My Lord,

THE French Ambassador called upon me this afternoon wishing to know, on behalf of his Government, what answer I was prepared to give to the proposal put forward by Italy that in the event of Turkey refusing the proposals of the Conference the Representatives should not separate, but leave Constantinople, and hold their meetings in some place outside the Turkish dominions.

I said that I had not heard the idea discussed until yesterday, nor did I know what was likely to be thought of it by the Powers generally. I could, therefore, express only a personal opinion; but to me the proposal appeared open to grave objections, and attended by no single advantage. Her Majesty's Government, I said, had from the first objected to a Conference sitting on Turkish affairs in which a Representative of the Porte should not be present. Nor was it clear what the new, or revived, Conference was to do. It was not to bring about an agreement among the Powers, for they were agreed already; it was not to coerce the Porte, for the use of coercive measures had been expressly disclaimed by England. What, then, was to be the result of its meetings? I added, as a third reason against the scheme, that the English Representative at the Conference was a member of the Cabinet, and the Head of an important public Department, and that his absence from England could not be unduly prolonged.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

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[a] Repeated to Constantinople.

No. 42.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(No. 6. Secret and Confidential.)

Foreign Office, January 3, 1877.

My Lord,

THE German Ambassador made to me this afternoon two communications which must be regarded as of a personal and private character, inasmuch as his Excellency said that he had no authority to speak to me on the subject.

He told that Prince Bismarck was opposed to the idea which had been suggested of Conferences of the Representatives of the six Powers being held at Venice or some other town out of the Ottoman dominions in case of the failure of the present negotiations at Constantinople. The plan, Count Münster said, did not recommend itself to Prince Bismarck, and would not receive the support of the German Government.

His Excellency added that Prince Bismarck was also, as at present advised, disinclined to agree to the Act or Protocol which it been had proposed that the Plenipotentiaries of the six Powers should sign with regard to the terms of arrangement submitted by them to the Porte in the Conference. Prince Bismarck objected to giving the consent of the German Government to the signature of an instrument of this nature without having knowledge of its complete text and of the purposes for which it was designed, and he would not with his present information authorize its signature by the German Plenipotentiary.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 43.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(No. 8.)

Foreign Office, January 3, 1877.

My Lord,

THE German Ambassador called upon me to-day, and said that he was instructed by his Government to make the following statement to me:

That the general state of the administration in Turkey, and the way in which the troops have been recruited, had caused great excitement and irritation among the Mahommedan population of Syria and Palestine.

That this irritation was directed generally against all European settlers, as they are all more or less held responsible for the troubles in Turkey.

That the German colonies in Palestine, in the neighbourhood of Jeffa, Kaïffa, and Beyrout, who were on the very best terms with the Mahommedan population, were beginning to suffer greatly, and life and property were more or less in danger.

That the German Government had anxiously avoided any interference in the affairs of Turkey, but that it might become a duty to protect the German subjects living in those parts.

That the German Ambassador at Constantinople had been instructed to draw the attention of the Turkish Government to these facts, and to express the firm expectation that the Porte would immediately take the most effective measures in order to prevent such excesses on the part of the Turkish population.

And that the German Government would feel very grateful if Her Majesty's Ambassador could be instructed to support the representations of his German colleague.

I replied that Her Majesty's Government had not received information of any apprehended danger to the security of foreign subjects at the places he had mentioned, but that they would be ready to support the Government of Germany in any representations which the circumstances might require, and that I would send instructions to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople accordingly.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 44.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(No. 10. Secret.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, January 3, 1877.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch No. 568 of the 27th ultimo, I have to state to you that it was neither the English nor Russian Plenipotentiaries who first suggested in the Conference the idea of the employment of Belgian troops in Turkey. It was the French Plenipotentiary, Count de Chaudordy, who mentioned it at the meeting of the Preliminary Conference held on the 14th ultimo.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 45.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Paget.

(No. 1.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January 3, 1877.*

THE Italian Ambassador called upon me yesterday, and stated that an idea had been thrown out, which his Government was inclined to look upon with favour, to the effect that, in the event of the Conference now being held at Constantinople breaking up without result, the Representatives of the Powers should not separate, but continue their meetings at some place outside the Ottoman dominions, so that concert between them might still be possible, and isolated action on the part of any one of them be avoided.

I said that I was not prepared at once to discuss a proposal which—though it had been casually referred to in conversation and in the newspapers—had never yet, so far as I was aware, been seriously brought forward. Expressing a merely personal opinion, and subject to further consideration, I thought it open to obvious and grave objections. Her Majesty's Government had never consented to the principle of a Conference on Turkish affairs from which the Porte should be excluded, and, in the case of the English Representative, his continued absence from official and Parliamentary duty would be a serious inconvenience to the Government and to the public.

General Menabrea said that he would again raise the question in a few days hence.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 46.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 3, at night.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, January 3, 1877.*

I AM informed by Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that, as Count Zichy has not answered a telegram asking for explanations respecting act which General Ignatiew wishes the Plenipotentiaries to sign, instructions have not yet been sent to him.

No. 47.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 3, at night.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, January 3, 1877.*

TURKISH Ambassador tells me that, on his communicating to-day to Count Andrassy a telegram stating that Porte would be unable to accept most of the important points submitted to it in the Conference, his Excellency urged expediency of the Porte accepting them as a basis for negotiation and stating the objections which it might have to their being ultimately adopted without some modification.

No. 48.

Consul Skene to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 4, 1877.)

(No. 9. Political.)

My Lord, *Aleppo, December 14, 1876.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of my despatch of to-day's date to Sir Henry Elliot, reporting on recent disturbances in this Consular district, produced by the rigorous measures adopted by the Porte for the levying of troops.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

Inclosure in No. 48.

Consul Skene to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Aleppo, December 14, 1876.*

IT has just been reported to me that the Mussulman population of Tarsus is in a state of great excitement in consequence of a recruit belonging to that town having been flogged to death.

It appears that the man was afflicted with epilepsy, and on his representing to his Colonel that he was thereby rendered incapable of serving in the army, he was flogged without medical inspection, an epileptic fit came on, and he died. A mob, headed by the Softas of the place, called upon all the inhabitants to take up arms against the Government.

I have telegraphed to the Governor-General of Adana for further information, and in the event of its not being satisfactory, I think I ought to request Captain Hammond, who is at Alexandretta in command of Her Majesty's ship "Torch," to proceed to Mersyna for the protection of British subjects in the Province of Adana. I shall have the honour of reporting again to your Excellency on the subject when I shall have learnt whether or not the excitement continues, and if it does what form it has taken.

There has been a conflict between the Christians and Mussulmans of Beylan, but it does not seem to have been very serious.

A marriage was being celebrated in a Christian family when a numerous party of Mussulmans broke into the house by force. Blows were exchanged, and the Mussulmans were severely beaten. For two days bands of their friends paraded the streets, loudly vowing vengeance on all the Christians of the town. The Governor-General went in one day to Beylan, although the journey is usually made in three days, and he arrived in time to prevent further disorders by taking energetic steps for the punishment of the Mussulman offenders, and for the security of the Christian inhabitants.

During his Excellency's absence from Aleppo some Christian girls attending a day school at a French convent here have been repeatedly assailed by Mussulmans, who addressed gross language to them, and tried to pull off their veils in the streets. My French colleague has demanded their punishment, and as he has obtained ample evidence against them, there can be no doubt that a Governor-General, so impartial and efficient as Emin Pasha is proving himself to be, will not hesitate to do his duty.

When the reserve was called out from the different quarters of this town the people of one of them openly declared in a body that they would not give any soldiers, and it was not until they had been persuaded by influential persons that they finally consented. The state of public feeling at Aleppo in this respect was reported to your Excellency in my despatch of the 13th of July last.

At Aintab the arming of the Reserve has been met by threats of violent resistance, and at Killis a Christian was stabbed, not mortally, by a Mussulman, who cursed his religion for having caused the war requiring soldiers.

In my despatches of the 3rd August and 20th November, I have already reported to your Excellency two cases which occurred at Biredjik and at Aleppo, indicating the same tendency.

The punishment of Mussulman offenders under such circumstances, necessary though it be, may exasperate the Mahometan population, and give rise to more general outbreaks of resentment on their part. It is therefore greatly to be regretted that the calling out of the Reserve should be effected with such extreme haste and rigour in these provinces before its necessity has become compulsory, for these disturbances have no other origin than the peremptory arming of the Reserve to fight in a war caused by Christians. The

Governor-General endeavours to avert the evil consequences of the course enjoined, and on his speaking to me on the subject, I expressed my opinion freely to him, but the remedy can be found only at Constantinople not here.

If the Porte were to moderate the impatience displayed in the preparation of means to carry on a war, which may possibly not take place, better results might be obtained in the event of its being inevitable. An equal if not a greater number of the Reserve might be forthcoming were no doubt to remain of troops being indispensable. A considerable outlay, not yet proved to be necessary, as the Reserve is composed of trained soldiers, ready to march at once, would be avoided, and less risk would be incurred of further pretexts being furnished to strengthen opposition against Turkey, and weaken efforts in favour of peaceful reformation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

No. 49.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 4, 1877.)

(No. 14.) *Tiflis, December 20, 1876.*

My Lord,

FOUR battalions left Tiflis to-day for Ozurget.

All the large buildings in Kutais are to be got ready for barracks or hospitals by the 2nd January.

Reserve men are arriving at rate of 1,500 a-day.

The 38th division of infantry will, I believe, be left in Daghestan, and the 40th will be formed in its stead.

The following divisions are said to be filled up:—

Grenadiers, 10th, 39th, and 41st; 20th, 40th, and 18th will be completed by the end of month, hence the desire for an armistice of six weeks.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. RICKETTS.

No. 50.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 4, 1877.)

(No. 15.) *Tiflis, December 20, 1876.*

My Lord,

TWO THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED men have gone to Nicholai.

Plan of operations is to be as I reported in my despatch No. 12, to march by the three roads therein mentioned, concentrating near Erzeroum. An attack will also be made on Batoum.

14,000 horses have been purchased, cost of same 1,500,000 roubles, profit made by contract 400,000 roubles.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. RICKETTS.

No. 51.

Midhat Pasha to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 4, 1877.)

Sublime Porte, le 26 Décembre, 1876.

My Lord,

J'AI l'honneur, conformément aux ordres de Sa Majesté le Sultan et aux résolutions du Cabinet Impérial, d'accréditer près de votre Seigneurie son Excellence Odian Effendi, Sous-Secrétaire d'Etat au Département des Travaux Publics, chargé d'une mission spéciale motivée par les circonstances présentes.

Au moment où le Gouvernement du Sultan se trouve contraint, par le soin de sa conservation et de son honneur, de prendre une décision contraire aux vues des Puissances Européennes, telles qu'elles se sont formulées à la Conférence, il a considéré comme un devoir impérieux de fournir au Cabinet de St. James des explications plus complètes et plus intimes.

Votre Seigneurie voudra donc bien prêter à notre Envoyé Spécial sa bienveillante

attention et recevoir de sa bouche tous les éclaircissements et toutes les informations qu'il est chargé de lui présenter au nom de notre Gouvernement, pour expliquer et justifier les résolutions rédoubtables, mais malheureusement inévitables, qui s'imposent au Cabinet Ottoman.

Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique, tout en s'éclairant sur le véritable état des choses en Turquie, tel qu'il sera exposé par son Excellence Odian Effendi, acquierra la preuve qu'au milieu de la crise qu'elle traverse, la Turquie a gardé fidèlement le souvenir d'une alliance à la fois heureuse et féconde, dont le peuple Ottoman respectera toujours les traditions.

En remerciant à l'avance votre Seigneurie de l'accueil qu'elle voudra bien réserver à notre Envoyé, je la prie d'agréer, &c.

(Signé) MIDHAT.

No. 52.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—Received January 4.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, January 4, 1877, 10·45 A.M.*

IT is said that General Tchernayeff, who had arrived here with the intention of returning to Servia, received a telegram from Russia yesterday ordering him not to do so, and that he is, therefore, going to Nice.

No. 53.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 4.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, January 4, 1877.*

A SIMILAR suggestion to that reported by Sir A. Paget as to Conference adjourning to Italy has been made here confidentially by the Italian Minister, but Count Andrassy seems to consider that it is not necessary as yet to come to any decision on the subject. Besides, it is believed that if General Ignatiew retires from Constantinople, no Russian (?) Diplomatic Representative will be left there.

No. 54.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 12.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January 4, 1877.*

I TRANSMIT to you, for your information and guidance, a copy of a despatch which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin,* recording a conversation which I held on the 3rd instant with the German Ambassador, in which his Excellency informed me of the fears entertained by his Government lest the German subjects settled in Syria and Palestine might be subjected to loss of life and property, in consequence of the excitement occasioned by the manner in which Turkish troops are recruited in those provinces.

Instructions have been given to the German Ambassador to draw the attention of the Porte to the matter, and I have to instruct your Excellency to support the representations of Germany should the circumstances call for your interference.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

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* No. 48.

No. 55.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Paget.

(No. 3.) *Foreign Office, January 4, 1877.*

Sir,

THE Italian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and strongly urged upon me, on behalf of his Government, the proposal which he had mentioned to me two days ago, that in the event of the Conference at Constantinople breaking up, the Plenipotentiaries of the six Powers should resume their deliberations at some place out of the Turkish dominions.

I went into the subject at length with General Menabrea, repeating to him the same objections which I had mentioned yesterday in conversation with the French Ambassador. Your Excellency will find these observations recorded in my despatch to Lord Lyons, No. 5 of yesterday's date, of which a copy has been forwarded to you.

I told General Menabrea that for the reasons I had given, I was personally opposed to the course suggested by his Government. If, however, the idea were taken up by the Governments of other Powers, it would become a question of European policy, and I should in that case wish to take the opinion of my colleagues upon it, which I had not at present had an opportunity of doing. I must, therefore, be understood in what I had said to him as expressing my individual views only, and as reserving the decision of Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 56.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 8.) *Foreign Office, January 4, 1877.*

Sir,

WITH reference to your despatch No. 907, Confidential, of the 30th ultimo, I have to state to your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government have learned with satisfaction the success with which Mr. Long, who has been charged with the administration of a fund subscribed in England for the relief and assistance of houseless Bulgarians, has carried out his mission, and the assistance which he has received from the Turkish authorities.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 57.

Vice-Consul Jago to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5, 1877.)

(No. 9. Political.) *Damascus, December 18, 1876.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith the copy of my despatch of yesterday's date to Her Majesty's Ambassador, respecting exemption of the Druzes from military service.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. S. JAGO.

Inclosure in No. 57.

Vice-Consul Jago to Sir H. Elliot.

Damascus, December 17, 1876.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that, apart from the Lebanon, where the Druze population is, in virtue of regulations, free from calls for service in the regular army, no attempt has been made by the authorities to apply the conscription to those of this nation residing in the city and villages of Damascus, while the large colonies

of Druzes on Mount Hermon and in the district of Hauran have been similarly exempted.

The cause of this exemption, I need hardly acquaint your Excellency, is the assumption—well founded, I believe—that any attempt at conscription would, in the case of small isolated communities, be resisted by flight to the fastnesses of the Hauran, and, in that of the powerful communities of Hermon and Haurao, by overt resistance.

In the district of St. Jean d'Acre, however, and notably near the town of Safet, are numerous Druze families mingled with the Moslem population of the villages thereabouts; and with respect to these, no exception has been ordered to be made by the authorities. In consequence, those liable to be drawn have taken to flight, and large and influential deputations of Druze Chiefs from all parts are now in Damascus, seeking to arrange by a money payment the exemption of these Safet Druzes.

They have called upon me to ask my aid in obtaining such exemption on easy terms. I have, however, declined to interfere, stating that, as subjects of the Sultan, they were bound to serve if called upon, especially in this present time of war.

They are now treating with the authorities, and the matter will doubtless be arranged, especially as the latter have little choice under present circumstances.

The Druze Chiefs express their determination to resist any attempt at conscription, and boast of the difficulties presented by their fastness of the Sejah, which has hitherto proved insuperable both to Egyptian and Turkish arms.

The military authorities informed me the other day that they have no intention of taking soldiers from the Druzes, but that no exception would be made in the district of Acre.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. S. JAGO.

No. 58.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5, 1877.)

(No. 90.) *Scutari, December 23, 1876.*

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of a despatch, and its inclosures, this day addressed to Sir Henry Elliot. I report to his Excellency the causes that have given rise to the discontent that now exists among the Mirdites, and certain observations made by me on the subject to the authorities here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 58.

Consul Kirby Green to Sir H. Elliot.

Scutari, December 23, 1876.

Sir,

I HAVE already several times had the honour of reporting to your Excellency that the Mirdites are dissatisfied at the conduct of the authorities here towards them, and that, consequently, the proceedings of emissaries sent to them from Montenegro to create difficulties for the Turkish Government have been greatly facilitated.

The principal complaints of the Mirdites are, that they have not yet been paid for their military services during the Crimean war; that the recent promises made by the Porte to their Chieftain, Prenk Bib Doda, who was permitted to return from his exile at Constantinople, have not been fulfilled; that their Chieftain, whilst at Scutari, was treated with marked disrespect by the Governor-General, who violated the sacred Mirdite right of hospitality by seizing a Mirdite who had come to pay homage to the newly arrived Prenk; that, instead of Prenk Bib Doda being named Mutesaref of Mirdicia, as promised, Dervish Bey, a Mahommedan of Prisrend, has received the empty title of Kaimakam, thus marking the intention of the Government to ignore the fact of the Mirdites being governed by their own Chieftain; that the small salaries that had been hitherto paid to the different Chiefs for the police of the highroads passing through their districts, have been discontinued; and that, finally, the markets of Scutari, Alesio, and Prisrend are no longer safe for the Mirdites, who are, consequently prevented from purchasing the corn necessary for their existence.

Some further acts of the Vali and the Commander-in-chief towards the Mirdites having tended to increase the dissatisfaction of the mountaineers, I thought it advisable to remonstrate with their Excellencies on the imprudence of their conduct, at a time when the slightest disaffection among the Roman Catholic tribes of North Albania might endanger the very existence of the now comparatively small force on the Montenegrin frontier, and plunge North Albania into the anarchy which exists in the Herzegovina.

My observations being unanswerable, the Pashas simply denied that they were acting as it was supposed, and declared that their sole object was to come to a satisfactory understanding with Prenk Bib Doda, whom they had invited for the purpose to Scutari. I told them that it was useless to expect that the Mirdite Chieftain would now act upon their promises; but that, if they really desired to conciliate him, I would, on their formal assurance that he would be permitted to come and leave Scutari in perfect safety, endeavour to induce him to comply with their request by adding my assurance for his personal security to theirs.

After two days of consideration over my proposal, the Pashas informed me that they had ascertained that the Mirdites were not discontented, and that they had determined upon doing as heretofore, and not interfering with them.

I warned their Excellencies that facts were not to be got rid of by the mere process of denying their presence, as had been unfortunately demonstrated in some of the neighbouring provinces, where, for a whole year, the Turkish authorities persisted in declaring that no insurrection existed. I had been in hopes that, at a moment when nearly every Christian population in the Ottoman dominions was, more or less, inclined to create difficulties for the Imperial Government, the Vali of Scutari would avail himself of the exceptional condition of the Roman Catholic mountaineers in his Province to strengthen their allegiance, but I regretted to observe that it had been determined instead to leave the ground open to the operations of foreign agitators.

It is said that, besides the Montenegrin emissaries, money and arms have been sent to the Mirdites by the Slav Committees in Dalmatia, and by the Italian Albanians.

Yesterday I was shown by M. Wassich, the Austrian Consul-General, a letter he had just received from Prenk Bib Doda, in which he complains of the conduct of the Turkish authorities, and expresses a fear that the Mirdites will be forced into having recourse to reprisals.

I understand that a similar letter has been addressed to the French Consul.

Through the courtesy of M. Wassich I am enabled to furnish your Excellency, herewith, with a copy of the letter in question, as also with a translation of it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 58.

Prenk Bib Doda to M. Wassich.

(Translation.) *Orosei, December* 18, 1876.

Sir,

THE Government of His Majesty the Sultan has ordered the markets to be closed to the Mirdite population. Already a great number of poor from this great tribe have been driven away from the town of Prisrend, being informed by the authorities of that place "that His Majesty the Sultan can no longer let them have the cereals that are necessary for them, and that they must return to their respective homes."

This ill-judged step of the Ottoman authority may lead this population, which is exceedingly poor, to excesses which might bring about unfortunate consequences for both parties; especially as the Mirdite people have not yet given a serious motive for the Ottoman Government to adopt such rigourous measures.

Further, I am being repeatedly summoned to Scutari by the authorities at a moment when these are aware that my extreme bodily weakness prevents my undertaking the shortest of journeys; and at the same time I am threatened, if I refuse, with serious (military) operations against this country. This appears to me to be to wish absolutely to force this people to strong acts of reprisal, which are entirely opposed to my views and ideas.

Owing to these proceedings, which I cannot qualify, I turn towards you, Sir, to ask for advice calculated to dissipate the terrible situation which is being made for this country, and sure that I shall find in you, and in the exalted Imperial and Royal Government, that support of which I have never doubted, I declare, &c.

(Signed) PRENK BIB DODA.

No. 59.

Musurus Pasha to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5.)

My Lord, *Ambassade Impériale Ottomane, Londres, le* 5 *Janvier*, 1877.

JE m'empresse d'accuser réception de la lettre que votre Excellence a bien voulu m'écrire en date d'aujourd'hui.

Jamais votre Excellence ne m'a dit dans nos différentes entrevues, jamais, dans mes communications avec le Gouvernement Impérial, je n'ai donné à entendre que la Sublime Porte devait ou pouvait s'attendre à l'assistance ou à la protection du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine dans le cas où son refus d'accepter les propositions des Puissances amènerait une guerre entre l'Empire Ottoman et d'autres pays.

Quant à la partie de la dépêche télégraphique de son Excellence Safvet Pacha du 24 du mois dernier, où il est dit que "la Sublime Porte compte plus que jamais sur l'appui bienveillant du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique dans les circonstances difficiles que nous traversons," c'est l'expression d'un vœu, d'un espoir qu'inspirent à la Sublime Porte les dispositions bienveillantes du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine et la politique traditionnelle de la Grande Bretagne; et votre Excellence ne m'a jamais rien dit qui indiquât une altération dans ces dispositions amicales et bienveillantes du Cabinet dont elle fait partie.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) MUSURUS.

No. 60.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5, *at night.)*

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Vienna, January* 5, 1877.

THE Roumanian Agent informed me to-day that, after our conversation reported in my despatch No. 7, Confidential, of the 3rd instant, he received instructions to intimate to Count Andrassy that his Government would resent explanation given by the Porte of certain Articles of Turkish Constitution by withholding the tribute, and that he was also to ask my opinion on the subject.

I declined expressing one on the merits of the case, which might be more or less represented as that of Her Majesty's Government. It might be presumed, however, your Lordship would consider Porte had been indiscreet in adding another irritating question to those with which it had already to deal, and I promised to inform you that his Government are anxious to know whether you would not consider them justified in withholding the tribute, unless (?) they receive satisfaction.

He said also that, in answer to Austrian overture respecting neutrality, reported in my No. 7, he had been instructed to state to Count Andrassy that Roumania hoped to be permitted to remain neutral, and would count in that case upon Austrian eventual support for the maintenance of its territorial integrity and political position; but he believes under present circumstances, should war take place between Russia and Turkey, the country would be unanimous in making common cause with Russia.

No. 61.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6, 1877.)

(No. 43. Political.) *Erzeroom, December* 6, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that the Governor-General and Commander of the 4th Army Corps, Samih Pasha, left this for Kars on a tour of inspection on the 4th instant. Faik Pasha, the second in command, has been left in charge of the Government of this province, pending the arrival of a Lieutenant-Governor, who, it is stated, has been appointed to assist Samih Pasha in the civil administration, and who is expected shortly from Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 62.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6, 1877.)

(No. 44. Political.)

Erzeroom, December 6, 1876.

My Lord,

YOUR Lordship will have learned that General Lauris Melikoff has been appointed to the chief command of the Russian army on the Turkish frontier.

General Melikoff is an Armenian and is thoroughly acquainted with this country. He took an active part in the military operations in this part of Turkey during the Crimean war, and on the re-establishment of peace, he was the first Russian officer who came to Erzeroom in an official capacity. I then made his acquaintance. Since then he has, I am told, frequently travelled in Armenia, and he has probably made himself thoroughly acquainted with the country from a military point of view.

General Melikoff, then Colonel, had, in 1856, the reputation of being a very active, able, and dashing officer, and, from what I then heard related of him, he evidently merited a reputation which he has been able to maintain to the present time.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 63.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6, 1877.)

(No. 45. Political.)

Erzeroom, December 6, 1876.

My Lord,

THE endeavours now being made to create large stores of grain on the frontier fortified positions are entailing severe suffering and loss on the peasants of this Province.

Anxious not to be crippled through want of provisions in Kars and Ardahan, Samih Pasha has of late been accepting from the villages, in lieu of money, wheat and barley in payment of taxes, and, in addition, the various villages have been called upon to furnish, according to their means, certain quantities of grain.

The villagers are glad enough to pay taxes in grain, and do not demur to furnish the Government with whatever grain they can spare against promise of payment in the future; but having refused to undertake the duty of transporting to Kars in the winter, the police have been employed to compel them, and strings of carts and sledges were soon made to start from the villages; but the deep snow was impassible; oxen very soon broke down and the police were obliged to let the villagers go back to their homes, but the obligation of rendering in Kars or Ardahan the quantity allotted to each village has not been removed.

The villagers have been told that the grain must go at once to the fortresses, and they must find the way to take it.

No other means existing, the villages within a certain radius of Erzeroom have sent agents here to try and get those traders who are connected with Kars and Ardahan to purchase in Kars and Ardahan the grain they have to furnish, and make it over to the stores, getting in return separate receipts for each of the taxed villages.

There are many traders here who are ready to do the work, and it will undoubtedly be done; it will bring temporary relief to the peasants, and the provision stores will seemingly be stocked, but the ultimate result will be to ruin utterly the peasants, who will at last have to sell even the rags of clothes they possess to satisfy the demands of the traders, while the garrisons will find that their supplies have not been augmented.

The traders, who will of necessity be in partnership with the storekeepers and accountants of the army, as they were in a similar transaction in 1854, otherwise they could not undertake the business, will work only on condition of receiving from the peasants, either in money or in kind, three or four times the present value of every bushel of grain they make over to the stores on account of the villages; and this, or any greater sum they may demand, the peasants must consent to give bonds for. Thus the action of the Government is compelling the peasants—Mussulman as well as Christian—to purchase immediate temporary relief at a cost which in a few months must, by ruining them, render them valueless to the State.

The action of the Government might, if the military gained by it, be somewhat excusable under its present critical and difficult position, but no real relief will result, for the grain which will be poured into the Government stores at Kars and Ardahan will

come, not from other districts, but from magazines in those places; thus it will be but the removing of grain from one store to another; and while the magazines will seemingly be augmented, the stock in each fortress will not be increased in the least.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 64.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6, 1877.)

(No. 46. Political.)

Erzeroom, December 10, 1876.

My Lord,

IN the early part of 1856, the Commander of the British forces in the Crimea instructed Major Stuart, then Acting-Commissioner with the Turkish army at Erzeroum, to report on the roads from Trebizond to Erzeroum, with a view to a British force being sent for the defence of this part of Turkey, and he was instructed to report also on the resources of the country in regard to provisions and means of transport.

Major Stuart, knowing that I had frequently travelled over the different roads to Trebizond, and that my acquaintance with the country and people enabled me to estimate the resources, applied to me for the necessary information; and he, very kindly, in his report gave me as his authority for the details he gave; he likewise recommended my being called to head-quarters to give more minute details. The war coming to a close immediately after, no further action was taken in the matter.

As the events which then eventually attracted the attention of our military commanders may shortly occur again, I venture to lay before your Lordship a paper I have drawn up containing:—

1st. Observations on the points of debarkation for troops destined to occupy Armenia or to march against Georgia.

2ndly. Observations on, and details of the roads, from the sea-board to Erzeroum and Kars.

3rdly. Remarks on halting-places.

4thly. Observations on the ability of Koordistan to furnish transport and supplies for an army.

Your Lordship will, I trust, pardon the liberty I now take in adding a few remarks on the advantage of attacking Russia through Georgia by way of Erzeroum should present complications unfortunately lead to war with that Empire. Being a civilian I would not venture to make these observations, but as I have had occasion to hear the question discussed by military men, in what I state I only quote the opinions of competent persons.

In Russia I several times heard surprise expressed at the Allies having in the late war ignored the military importance of Armenia as a base whence the most vulnerable point of the Russian Empire could have been assailed, and throwing their forces against the strongest positions where success only increased danger and difficulty, they left Georgia unassailed; whereas, had an army advanced into that province from the high lands of Armenia, sympathizers would have been met with everywhere, and powerful auxiliaries would have joined it with their arms, and Russia would have had her energies severely tested.

The Russians maintain their position in Georgia by force of arms, and it is only through their military superiority that they can retain their hold upon the country. The population generally is discontented, and in the Lesghae Daghestanees and Circassians, the Russians have deadly enemies, who would be but too ready to make common cause with any successful invader. Of this I have received so many assurances that I think there is but little room for doubt that the first success gained by an invading army would be the signal for a rising throughout Circassia and Daghestan. The covert hostility of the Georgians would at the same time cause serious embarrassment, and necessarily weaken the ability of any Russian force to resist attack.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

Inclosure in No. 64.

Memorandum respecting Routes to Erzeroum from the Seaboard, and Resources of Erzeroom.

TWO points present themselves on the Asiatic coast of the Black Sea for the landing of a military force destined to march to Erzeroum, Kars, or the Russian frontier: Batoum and Trebizond.

Batoum.—Batoum is, after Sebastopol, the safest and most convenient harbour in the Black Sea. Situated at the south-east extremity of the Euxine, it affords effectual shelter from all winds but the north-east, to which it is quite open. This wind, however, having but a short expanse of water to pass over, creates occasionally a sea, which may be disagreeable, but cannot be in the least dangerous to vessels. The port is also subject to ground-swells during heavy north and north-west gales. The anchorage is good: bottom, mud and sand; no rocks. Deep water close to the shore near the town; shallow towards the bottom of the bay.

Trebizonde.—A roadstead sheltered only from the south to west winds; quite open to all other winds. Bottom, rock and mud. Not very good holding-ground. At the approach of bad weather vessels must run for shelter to Platana or Surmeneh, each distant about twelve miles. This roadstead is visited by from four to six steam-boats weekly. It is the head station of the Black Sea for most of the steam companies, and boats generally remain there at anchor from two to three days. During the past twenty years one steamboat at this roadstead has been lost.

Roads to Interior.—The Turkish Government has for the past three years been engaged in the construction of a road from Batoum to Kars. This road, when completed, will bring the distance between these two towns to about 125 miles. This road, though nearly completed, is as yet worthless for military purposes, as three points, where engineering skill and considerable outlay are required to push it through masses of rock, are, as yet, untouched. For an army having Russia for its adversary this road, were it completed, presents dangers which will be detailed further on.

From Trebizond to Erzeroum a cart road has been constructed by the Turkish Government. This road, 171 miles in length, is a very fair road; it is macadamized throughout. It is practicable during the summer months, that is, from April till the end of November, for heavy guns. This is the only practicable road from the seaboard to Erzeroum, Kars, and the Armeno-Russian frontier, and is the one used for military purposes by the Turkish Government.

Advantages of the two Roads.—The road from Batoum to Kars would, were it completed, offer the advantages of: firstly, a good safe port for the landing of troops and munitions of war; and, secondly, a shorter distance to Kars and the Russian frontier. Its disadvantages would be, however, serious. Firstly, the country for the first thirty or forty miles is feverish; secondly, the road winds through deep, rocky, precipitous valleys, for the greater part of its length, which necessarily confine the road within narrow limits, rendering an advance in heavy column impossible, and obliging troops to march in a long weak column; thirdly, the conformation of the country does not permit the deploying or massing of troops at short intervals. An army, therefore, advancing along this road would have to trust for safety, not to its ability to withstand attack, but to the absence of an enemy; fourthly, this road runs nearly parallel to the Russian frontier, and within, for military purposes, dangerous proximity to that frontier, for it exposes an advancing army to a flank attack at many points. This road not being a highway and being removed from the centres of commerce, and distant from the grain-producing plains, would not offer facilities in the way of means of transport or provisions for large bodies of men going along it.

The road from Trebizond, on the contrary, being the main artery for the trade of Persia and Koordistan, offers facilities of every kind. Its disadvantages are: firstly, that it commences from an unsafe roadstead; secondly, that the distance by it from Trebizond to Erzeroom is 171 miles, to Kars about 279 miles, thus making the distance from the seaboard to Kars about 154 miles more than it is by the Batoum road. The first, though a serious disadvantage, is more apparent than real, for during the spring, summer, and autumn the south coast of the Black Sea is not subject to heavy storms, and when they do occur sufficient time is always given to enable vessels to seek refuge at Platana, Surmeneh, or Batoum about 80 miles distant, the run to which is free from danger or rocks or a lee-lying coast. The second disadvantage is more than counter-balanced by the much less abrupt conformation of the country from Trebizond to Erzeroom, than from Batoum to Kars, by the road passing through a country possessing abundant supplies and abundant means of transport, and by it being remote from the Russian frontier, and,

consequently, perfectly free from danger, for even small bodies of troops to march over, supposing the enemy to be Russia. So long as Kars and Erzeroom are held by Turkish forces the Trebizond-Erzeroom road cannot by any possibility be menaced by Russian troops. From the knowledge I gained by personal experience in 1854-55, and from the military opinions I have heard on the subject, I am led to believe that in a war with Russia, Batoum, however safe and advantageous may be its harbour, could only be used for the operations of a small force, acting to divert the enemy's attention from the main attack and by threatening Akhalsik, compelling him to divide his forces.

The Batoum-Kars road having been commenced since I visited that part of the country, it is not in my power to give an itinerary of it; I shall, therefore, make no further remarks on it, and confine my observations to the main road—that of Trebizond. Leaving the town of Trebizond, the road runs along the shore in an easterly direction for about one and a-half miles, then turning south it enters the valley of the Deghirmen Dereh, and goes along it for fourteen miles to Djevizlik. This valley is broad, is well populated, and offers many sites for camping. The road runs to within about five miles of Djevizlik, almost parallel with and level to the Deghirmen Soo or Stream, which courses its way through the valley, when, after crossing from the left to the right bank of the stream, it rises about 200 or 300 feet, and goes along undulating ground to within a very short distance of Djevizlik, when it dips and returns to the river level. Djevizlik is a small village near the head of the Deghirmen Dereh Valley and the entrance of the Matchka Valley. From Djevizlik there are two roads to Erzeroom, one no longer used as a highway, continues up the Deghirmen Dereh to its head, and crosses the Koulat range by the Karakapan Mountain, passing by Istavros it rejoins the main road near the Village of Balaklior; the other, the Main road, crosses the Deghirmen Soo at Djevizlik, and entering the Matchka Valley, proceeds along it for fifteen miles, gradually ascending to Hampsoe Kooi, a large village, beautifully situated on one of the slopes of the Khoulat range. From this village the road makes an abrupt ascent by zig-zags to within a short distance of the summit of the mountain it winds along; it here goes for some miles through thick forests, having the Matchka Valley on the right. A precipice of more than 1,000 feet in depth, and almost as straight up and down as a wall, here commences, terminating about eight miles further on at Guedikler by the gradual rise of the valley and equally gradual decline of the road. Guedikler is a Police Station and resting place for caravans, during winter storms, at the northern foot of Mount Zighana. From Guedikler the road ascends the bleak barren side of Mount Zighana by long curves and passing the crest at an elevation of about 7,500 feet, makes a rapid but not long descent down the southern forest-clad face of the mountain to the Village of Zighana. From this village the road continues winding along the sides of the mountain and at a considerable elevation for about three miles, when another rapid zig-zag descent brings it down into the valley of the Khar Tchai, through which it passes following its sinuosities and going over that ground to Gumush Hané, passing by Ardasa. Continuing to follow the course of the River Khar Tchai, the road continues an almost perfect level to Murad Oglu Khan Village. About three miles beyond this it passes into a short gorge called Guetchi Kalik, and rising gradually, continues over undulating ground past the villages of Balabor, and entering the Valley of the Djoruk runs to the town of Baiboort; continuing along this valley, which is wide and flat for about thirteen miles, the road again enters a short gorge which terminates at the foot of Mount Kop (Kop Dagh). Here there is a post station, and some stabling accommodation for caravans; from this the road gradually ascends the mountain to an elevation of about 8,500 feet, it then winds round the mountain and by a long sweeping descent passing the villages of Burna Kapan enters the plain of Erzeroom. From the foot of the mountain the road is flat the whole way, a distance of about thirty-nine miles.

The post stations on this road are:—

Djevizlik,	5	hours,	equal to	15	miles.
Zighana,	7	"	"	21	"
Ardasa,	6	"	"	18	"
Gumush Hané,	5	"	"	15	"
Baiboort,	7	"	"	24	"
Kop,	6	"	"	18	"
Burna Kapan,	5	"	"	15	"
Kara Bournou,	6	"	"	18	"
Erzeroom,	7	"	"	21	"

It will be seen that two mountain ranges have to be crossed,—the first at Zighana,

7,500 feet, the other at Kop, 6,500 feet. These two passes are occasionally closed by storms and snow drifts during the winter months for two or three days at a time.

From Trebizond to Erzeroom the road passes through a country which affords good camping ground at short distances; villages are numerous. Wood is abundant from Trebizond to Gumush Hané. Beyond this town the country is bare, and wood becomes scarce. Good water is abundant everywhere, the greater part of the road being constructed along banks of rivers. Where it leaves the rivers, springs and fountains are abundant.

There are two shorter routes to Erzeroom, but they would only be practicable for infantry and cavalry; they cross very high mountains, and, as they are but tracks, they are difficult and very tiring. The country through which they pass is also subject to heavy and almost daily rains during the summer, so that there is much mud on them. These routes are, one by the Kara Kapan, already alluded to, the other by the Kazooklee Dagh. This route quits the main road about nine miles from Trebizond, and, going by a lateral valley called the Karanlik Dereh, bears up a very long ascent to the Kazooklee Dagh, the highest mountain in the Khoulat range, it then gradually descends into the Djorok Valley, and rejoins the main road about nine miles from Baiboort.

Advantageous position of Erzeroom for the head-quarters of an Army.—Erzeroom, the capital of Armenia, possesses exceptional advantages to supply means of transport, and the principal articles required by an army; and being about 140 miles from the Russian frontier, and the intervening country offering many most advantageous points for checking the advance of a Russian force, it naturally becomes a safe centre for the head-quarters and for the magazines of an army defending the province, or advancing against Georgia.

As the commerce passing to Persia, and the trade of Khoordistan, is centred in Erzeroom, this town possesses facilities for transport which no other town in Asia Minor could approach. Thus, not only could large numbers of horses be purchased, but many hundreds of horses and ox-carts could be engaged by contract; 10,000 to 20,000 horses, mules, and camels could in a short time be collected, by purchase or hire, and fodder for any number of animals is easily obtainable.

Erzeroom not being dependent on any single district, would suffer no diminution of supplies by the advance of an enemy in any particular direction; the southern or western parts of the province could meet all demands were Kars and the whole of the eastern portion occupied by Russian troops.

At Erzeroom could be procured in large quantities horses, mules, camels, oxen, sheep, hay, clover, barley, straw, wheat, rice, butter, wood for fuel, planks, beams, colonials, such as tea, coffee, sugar, rum, &c.; groceries and materials for clothing would have to be imported.

Horses.—Strong, active, but small horses are bred in large numbers at Van, Moosh, Bittis, Seerd, Djezireh, and Diarbekir. These horses carry loads of 330 lbs., and are purchasable at about 18*l.* per head.

Mules.—The Pashalik of Erzeroom and Diarbekir produce the greatest number of mules; they are hardy, strong, and docile animals; they carry less than horses, but surpass them in endurance. Cost, 20*l.* to 30*l.*

Camels.—Camels are procurable from Persia and Mesopotamia, where large numbers are bred. The price is, for one kind, capable of carrying from 180 to 240 okes, 25*l.* to 35*l.*; for another kind, called Louk, capable of carrying from 120 to 180 okes, 12*l.* to 17*l.*

Oxen and Sheep.—For food purposes oxen and sheep are abundant, almost every village in the province breeding them in large quantities. Beef is inferior in quality. Mutton is very good. Prices vary according to the season, spring and early summer being the dearest periods. An ox can be purchased at from 5*l.* to 15*l.*, according to age and size; sheep cost from 10*s.* to 20*s.*

Hay and Clover.—Hay and clover are obtainable in any quantities, and are cheap.

Barley.—Horses are fed on barley. This cereal is extensively grown. Its price naturally varies according to demand; at present it costs 1*l.* for 600 lbs. weight (the somar).

Straw.—Chopped straw is the chief food of the horses and cattle, barley-straw being preferred. The quantity produced always exceeding the demand, the price is low.

Wheat.—In wheat also the supply exceeds the demand, and large quantities are frequently lost to the growers. The quality is very fine, and the flour consequently very good. Price 2*l.* 10*s.* per somar of 240 okes.

Rice.—Rice is brought from Persia and Diarbekir. The Persian rice is of good quality, the Diarbekir is inferior. Price—Persian, 4*s.* to 6*s.* per 16½ lbs.; Diarbekir, 3*s.* to 5*s.*

Butter.—The chief occupation of the different Koord tribes during the summer is the manufacture of butter; it is salted, put into skins, and brought to the towns in the autumn in large quantities, where it sells for about 1*s.* 10*d.* per oke of 2¾ lbs. It is good for cooking purposes, but not for eating.

Fuel.—Wood and charcoal are the only fuel. There are two kinds, tchum or pine, and peloot or hardwood. The former comes from the Soghanlee range of mountains, between Erzeroom and Kars, about 70 miles distant from the former, the latter chiefly from the hills about Baiboort on the Trebizond road, also about 70 miles distant. Carriage makes fuel dear, and it is one of the most costly of necessaries.

Planks and Beams.—Planks and beams are procurable in any quantities from the Soghanlee Dagh, and should that range be closed by an enemy, the districts north of Erzeroom could be resorted to. The prices quoted are present rates.

Barrack Accommodation at Erzeroom.—Though Erzeroom is the head-quarters of the 4th Army Corps, the barrack accommodation is very small, and any concentration of troops in it necessitates the occupation of the various hans or caravanserais buildings in which European soldiers could not exist without serious risk to health. The Commander of any European occupying force would, therefore, have immediately on arriving to undertake either the repair and alteration of these hans, or new buildings would have to be constructed. Hence the supply of planking and beams is a matter of serious importance, and it is fortunate that the town could meet a large demand.

The Road to Kars.—There are two roads from Erzeroom to Kars. No. 1 the highway, by which guns and carts can proceed, goes south for a short distance, and striking the hills, turns east, crosses the Deveh Bouyounou Pass, descends into the Passin Plain, passing by Hassan Kaleh, eighteen miles. From Hassan Kaleh it goes along the plain of Lower Passin to Yenikeui, forty-eight miles. This is a large village of importance to an advancing army. It is situated at the south-west foot of the Soghanlee Mountains, and its position makes it a good point for a military depôt. Leaving Yenikeui, the road ascends to the plateau of Hunkiar Doozee, in the centre of the Soghanlee Pass. Crossing this plateau, which is bordered with pine trees, it gradually descends to Tchiphaklee seven hours. This road is well furnished throughout its length with villages, situated either close to it, or a little way off on either side. Water is abundant, and there are no obstacles to render the passage of guns difficult or laborious. The other road, No. 2, practicable for infantry and cavalry, but impassable to wheeled vehicles, takes a westerly course down the Plain of Erzeroom to Hintz, 9 miles; to Barr, 12 miles; Lisko, 12 miles; to Shankhi, 12 miles; here the road divides, one branch going to Oltee, 13½ miles, the other to Penek 16½ miles; to Ersenik, 13½ miles; to Zillehgee, 13½ miles; and Kars, 18 miles. This is the winter branch. Another branch goes from Hintz to Narman, 42 miles from Erzeroom; to Terpenk, 31 miles; to Eurtulee, 18 miles; to Penek, 15 miles; to Gueleh, 18 miles; and Kars, 36 miles. From Terpenk a branch road leads down to Bardos, 18 miles; and then via Tchiplaklee to Kars.

The route No. 1 has a branch road to Kars, separating from the main line at a point in the Hunkiar Doozee. It runs to the left, and descends into the Valley of Bardos, and joins there the route No. 2. This branch is passable for carts, but it is difficult, and makes the route rather longer.

Kars to Gumri.—From Kars to Gumri no description of the road, 33 miles, need be given. It crosses a plain the whole way, having one river to cross, the Arpa Tchai. This plain can be traversed in any direction.

(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB, *Consul.*

Erzeroom, December 10, 1876.

No. 65.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 6, 1877.)

(No. 47. Political.)

Erzeroom, December 12, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that telegraphic orders were received here on the 9th instant to call under arms the last of the list of men on the military registers, the Mustafiz, or all able-bodied men not included in the Redifs.

This order has created much excitement here. A call of the kind was not made even for the war of 1854, and it is regarded as the certain precursor of a deadly strife with Russia.

The enrolment has commenced.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 66.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 6, 1877.)

(No. 48. Political.)

Erzeroom, December 12, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE to report that troops are being brought from the interior, and sent on to the frontier as rapidly as possible.

From Constantinople the battalions of the 4th Army Corps, which left this last spring, are being sent back, and are marched on from Trebizond with the least delay.

It is stated that several battalions from the 6th Army Corps are to come here from Syria.

At Kars, the military authorities state that the force is now composed of 18,000 men, but, from private individuals and from the contractors, who must know, I hear that the garrison is composed of 8,000.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 67.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 6, 1877.)

(No. 26. Political.)

Trebizond, December 11, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a despatch which I addressed to-day to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, on the subject of the outrages committed by the tax-collectors at the villages of Shana and Samarouksa, of which I have made mention in my despatch No. 24, Political, of the 6th ultimo.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Inclosure in No. 67.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to Sir H. Elliot.

Trebizond, December 11, 1876.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch to your Excellency of the 6th ultimo, I have the honour to report that the inquest on the subject of the abuses committed by the tax-gatherers at Shana and Samarouksa has been completed some time since, but that it is only lately that, after translation and perusal of numerous documents and verbal information from several sources, that I have been able to arrive at some satisfactory conclusion on the real state of things.

According to the Armenian version, the first part of the question, that is, the perpetration of outrages, has been fully proved. According to the Pasha, the most important heads of accusation, such as drenching, keeping the peasants in their wet clothes, bound up, for hours, &c., have not been substantiated. It would seem that in some cases the facts stated by the Armenians were denied by the Greeks and Mussulmans, whom they cited as witnesses. However, in my opinion, allowing for exaggeration, there is still sufficient ground for serious complaint.

With respect to what I consider to be the main question, that is, the refusal of justice on the part of the Pasha, the Armenians themselves seemed to be convinced that it cannot be entertained. The editors themselves have signed a declaration to the effect that "it appears from the documents presented that the Governor-General had taken the matter in hand."

I cannot ascertain the date of the publication in the Armenian papers of the outrages at Shana, but I know that the news was received here through them on the 30th October last, that is, a week after the date on which it has been proved that the petition was handed to the Pasha. Taking into account that there are four days' voyage between this and Constantinople, it is evident that the correspondent of the Armenian newspapers at Trebizond, a schoolmaster, was complaining of the Pasha's refusal of justice at the time when, or even before, the petition had been presented to him.

In dismissing, therefore, this last head of accusation as ungrounded, the first must be fully maintained.

The Pasha having told me that the final decision would be taken at Constantinople, I observed to him that this course might apply to the question between the Government and the editors, but that there was a distinct case between the tax-collectors and the peasants, which, in my opinion, should be tried by the local Tribunals. Although admitting the culpability of the collectors, who are still in prison, he answered that he might continue to keep them in confinement for an undetermined period, but that he did not want to assume the responsability of passing sentence on them. He then explained that the exaggerations to which the Armenians had resorted to, for selfish motives, in all parts of the Empire, in a moment when the Government was placed in so difficult circumstances, had incensed the Mussulmans here against them, and that, although willing to inflict adequate punishment on the culprits, he did not feel justified, under present circumstances, to do it in a way which might lead to regrettable complications.

The Governor-General may take an exaggerated view of the supposed danger, but I think that he is sincere in his opinion, although the advisability of subordinating the course of justice to political considerations may be strongly objectionable.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 68.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 6, 1877.)

(No. 29. Political.)

Trebizond, December 13, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a despatch which I have addressed this day to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, relating to the military movements at Trebizond.

I had reported in a previous despatch to Sir H. Elliot of the 2nd instant, the passage of five battalions, which, together with the ten mentioned now, make a total of fifteen battalions arrived here for Erzeroom.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Inclosure in No. 68.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to Sir H. Elliot.

Trebizond, December 13, 1876.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to report that within the last few days ten battalions of infantry have arrived here on board Government transports.

Three of these battalions have started for Erzeroom, three others are about to depart, and the remaining four have just been landed.

All these battalions are well provided with ammunition, tents, pickaxes, spades, &c., and some even with a few horses and mules for transport, as well as with one or two field pieces.

The battalions coming from the seat of war have not their full complement. I was told of one from Montenegro numbering only 300 men. They are deficient in clothing, but those which were quartered at Constantinople are well provided with all the necessaries. With few exceptions, the men appear to be in good health.

Yesterday a steamer, which was descried in the offing, is supposed to be the one carrying two and a half battalions to Batoom. Two of the Government transports which landed troops here have left to-day for the same place with a residue of two and a half battalions and five large cannon on board.

No disorders have been committed by the troops in the town, but I am told that the five battalions which left for Erzeroom a fortnight ago have carried away provisions from the houses of the peasants along the road, and that they have divested several of those they met of their shoes and coats, and no wonder at the last larcenies, as some of them were in pitiable attire.

The Governor-General was telling me a few days ago that the expense of each

battalion from its landing to its arrival at Erzeroom is about 50,000 piastres, and that he is at his wits ends to procure the money. However, he has hitherto managed to do so, but unless remittances are made from Constantinople, I doubt whether he will be able to provide for all disbursements with the only resources of the province. Money is also required for the payment of the transport of cannon and ammunition, which represents also important sums.

Great difficulty is experienced in forwarding the latter, the muleteers getting for freight from Government only about one half what they receive from merchants. The Persian caravans being allowed to carry goods for the latter, while the Turkish were compelled to take Government loads, little by little the native muleteers have withdrawn to their villages. Nearly the whole of the 5,000 cases of ammunition received a month ago are still at Trebizond, and there is now, with the baggage and ammunition of the battalions arrived, an important increase in the number of packages to be conveyed to Erzeroom.

A Commission has been appointed to make a fair compromise between the Government and the muleteers, and, I understand, that it has just been decided that the Government stores should pay about one-third less than the freight paid by merchants. If this arrangement is not accepted by the caravans, the only way of procuring the means of conveyance is, perhaps, by making requisitions on the native owners of mules and horses, unless full freight is paid.

The enrolment, which has begun some time since, of the Redifs of all classes who still remained to be called out is carried on briskly. The men, I am told, answer willingly enough to the call, a war with Russia being very popular. They seem to be in no dread of its consequences, considering themselves to be quite a match for their enemies.

It is impossible to say what may be the number of the enlistments in this province, but the Pasha is sanguine that they will exceed 40,000, that is, between 5 and 6 per cent. on the Mussulman population, which is reckoned to amount, in round numbers, to 800,000 souls, but I doubt that this number may be attained.

The men enrolled here, as well as a few hundred who came from the neighbouring provinces, are marched to Erzeroom.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 69.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6, 1877.)

(No. 1378.) *Constantinople, December 21, 1876.*

My Lord,

IN forwarding Mr. Consul Zohrab's despatch to your Lordship of the 10th instant, respecting the roads and resources of the Province of Erzeroom, which reached me under flying seal, I have the honour to state that Colonel Home, to whom I communicated it, requests that it may be sent to the War Office, as it bears upon a paper which he was preparing before he left England.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 70.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6, 1877.)

(No. 1390.) *Constantinople, December 27, 1876.*

My Lord,

I LEARN upon authority which I believe to be good, but am unable absolutely to guarantee, that General Ignatiew is endeavouring to persuade the Turks that their wisest course is to trust entirely to Russia and to come to a direct understanding with her.

He intimates to them that the proposals to which they entertain such a natural repugnance are not his, but those of the Marquis of Salisbury, omitting, of course, to add how much his Lordship had reduced the demands which he himself was desirous of bringing forward.

With regard to the Greeks, whose irritation, as I have previously reported, is daily becoming more intense against the Guaranteeing Powers for confining themselves to the reforms to be secured to the Slavs, there can be no doubt of the efforts now being made by him to throw the responsibility and unpopularity on others.

Several of the Greeks with whom I am acquainted, some of them having long been intimate with General Ignatiew, have told me that the General had assured them of his own wish to put them exactly upon the same footing as the Slavs, but that he had been opposed and defeated by the Marquis of Salisbury.

I may add that the Ambassador's declarations produced no impression upon the gentlemen in question, and are not likely to have any on their countrymen in general, whose present exasperation against Russia is very great; but it cannot be denied that they entertain a strong feeling of resentment against Her Majesty's Government for being a party to proceedings which they believe to be as injurious to their interests as to the tranquillity of the Greek Provinces.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 71.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6, 1877.)

(No. 1392.) *Constantinople, December 26, 1876.*

My Lord,

I RECEIVED yesterday a private letter from Mr. Reade, giving an exceedingly bad account of the state of things at Yamboli, and of the disposition of the Commission of Inquiry into Shefket Pasha's case.

His official report has not yet reached me, but I at once acted upon the private letter, and sent to the Porte to desire measures to be taken to prevent the mockery of justice which Mr. Reade appears to anticipate.

The inclosed telegram had, however, just been received from the President of the Commission, which rendered all further action impossible, and it will be necessary to await Mr. Reade's return, which will be in a couple of days, to ascertain how the matter stands.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

December 28.—P.S. I spoke yesterday very seriously to Midhat Pasha upon the subject of Shefket Pasha's case, and he appeared to be convinced of the necessity of a strict and *bonâ fide* investigation of it.

Inclosure in No. 71.

Ismail Pasha to Midhat Pasha.

(Télégraphique.) *Yamboli, le 14 Décembre, 1876.*

J'AI l'honneur de vous informer que la Commission a complété hier au soir l'enquête dont elle avait été chargée. Après avoir délibéré avec Mr. Reade, l'enquête ne laissant rien à désirer, et l'accord s'étant établi, la Commission se rend aujourd'hui à Andrinople pour s'en retourner à la capitale.

No. 72.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6, 1877.)

(No. 1398.) *Constantinople, December 29, 1876.*

My Lord,

MILITARY preparations are being pushed on here with the utmost activity, and the men now being enrolled comprise fathers of families, only sons, and others who are exempted from service except in times of extreme emergency.

In most parts of the Empire the call has been answered with alacrity; but in some, especially Aleppo and Erzeroom, it has been received with sullen discontent, and with irritation against the Christians, who are looked upon as the source of the sacrifice the Mussulmans are called upon to make.

The figures given of the force that can be assembled to resist invasion are very large, but according to the most trustworthy information they exaggerate to more than the usual extent the number of really available men.

It is a mystery to everyone how the Government hope to find the means of meeting the expenses of even a short campaign; but there can now be little doubt that they and the country are resolved, at all hazards, to resist to the utmost rather than accept without a struggle what they regard as dishonourable and fatal conditions.

There are indications, on the other side, that the Russians look upon war as equally certain.

General Ignatiew may have expressed a hope that peace would be preserved, but from the time of the acceptation of the ultimatum the younger members of the Embassy and persons connected with it have never ceased to talk of their departure being merely temporarily deferred, and their preparations have quite latterly been resumed, as though they thought the moment of it to be drawing near.

The ready acceptance by General Ignatiew of the prolongation of the armistice to the 1st of March, by which it is extended almost exactly to the period at first proposed by the Porte, and at that time so summarily rejected by Russia, is full of significance.

If, however, I may venture to hazard an opinion, I would say that the game of the Russian Embassy will probably be to attempt to throw the whole blame of the ultimate rupture upon the Turkish Government.

General Ignatiew must have been perfectly aware that the projects to be submitted to the Porte contained much to which its acceptance was not likely to be obtained, except after important modification in the Conference.

By objecting to such modifications he will be able to represent the consequent rupture of the negotiations as the result of the rejection by the Porte of arrangements approved by all the Powers, and he will thus endeavour to obtain a sort of moral European sanction for the measures which his Government may think proper to adopt.

He has throughout been desirous that the decisions taken in the preliminary meetings should have the form of an ultimatum to be imposed upon the Porte, and although defeated in this attempt by the other Plenipotentiaries he may be expected still to give the projects the character which he wished them to have.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 73.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6, 1877.)

(No. 1304.)
Constantinople, December 28, 1876.
My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose the copy of a note which I have received from the Porte, complaining of further violations of the armistice by the Servians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 73.

Memorandum communicated to Her Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople.

DE nouveaux actes d'empiètements Serbes suivis la plupart du temps de scènes violentes viennent d'être signalés tant par le Commandant et les habitants de Novi Bazar que par le Gouverneur de Viddin.

Des fortins et des retranchements sont élevés à Abra, à Bucovick, à Tchoucovick, localités que les Serbes ont envahies après l'armistice, et où ils ont établi des sentinelles. Aujourd'hui leur base d'opération s'étend des hauteurs de Tchoucovick jusqu'à Rashka; des guérites sont construites pas plus loin que sur des points distant seulement d'une demi-heure à trois quarts d'heure de Novi Bazar, tels que le village de Blazava, la colline de Soukovitcha, et les hauteurs qui environnent les villages de Souscoslo, de Kotcha, et de Borica.

Ce mouvement en avant de plus en plus accentué et caractérisé par des efforts tendant à soulever les populations Chrétiennes soumises ne laisse pas que de préoccuper les esprits. Cette inquiétude d'ailleurs bien légitime se conçoit aisément en présence des actes d'agression qui signalent l'invasion d'un nouveau genre dont il s'agit. En voici quelques exemples:

Le Mardi 19 Décembre, vers 2½ heures de l'après-midi, deux frères nommés Suleiman

et Bekir, habitants de Novi-Varoch, étaient occupés à battre l'aire à Caratova, lorsqu'ils se virent attaqués soudain par une bande de quinze malfaiteurs environ débouchant de la Serbie. C'est à peine si les deux victimes de cette agression purent s'échapper sans être atteintes par les balles tirées sur elles.

En revanche les Serbes firent main basse sur tout ce qu'ils trouvèrent dans cet endroit; ils enlevèrent et emportèrent une paire d'animaux, des sacs, et quantité d'objets.

Les villages sis dans le voisinage de Sâlach continuent à subir également les incursions périodiques des bandes Serbes.

A Kayanoftcha, village dépendent de Belgradjik, le nommé Théodore vit sa maison envahie par cinq bandits qui lui volèrent des chaussures, des habits de femme, et une somme de 300 piastres.

A Stâkoftcha six malfaiteurs, également Serbes, s'introduisirent dans l'habitation d'un certain Kisto; ils emportèrent deux sacs de laine.

A Sternidol et à Chendja dix-huit Serbes pénétrèrent dans les maisons des nommés Kisto et Nédelko; ils ne s'en allèrent qu'après avoir battu les propriétaires et arraché au cou de leurs femmes plus de 700 piastres.

Sublime Porte, le 26 Décembre, 1876.

No. 74.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6, 1877.)

(No. 1305.)
Constantinople, December 28, 1876.
My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of three further Reports from Mr. Baring, respecting the progress of the trial of the persons accused of participation in the massacre at Batak; and of one giving an account of the further examination of the girls from Batak who were converted to Islamism, Mr. Baring's first Report on which was inclosed in my despatch No. 1341 of the 7th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 74.

Mr. Baring to Sir H. Elliot.

Philippopoli, December 18, 1876.
Sir,

THE Commission sat for the third time to try Ahmed Agha, on Saturday, the 16th instant.

After the *procès-verbal* of the previous day's sitting had been read, as also the depositions of certain witnesses which proved that Ahmed Agha was looked upon as the real commander of the Bashi-Bazouks, and that he was present while people were slaughtered after the arms had been given up, Ali Effendi began his defence by saying that Ahmed Agha, as Commander, always kept behind his men, whose movements he directed, and that, therefore, he never personally took part in the fighting; that he did all in his power to prevent the Bashi-Bazouks from killing any one after the surrender, but that, unfortunately, having no bugle wherewith to sound "cease firing," he was obliged to go to every band of Bashi-Bazouks and give the order verbally, so that a few people were unavoidably killed before he was able to check the ardour of all the forces under him.

He went on to say that no massacre took place after the people had surrendered, either in the presence or in the absence of Ahmed Agha, and disputed the evidence of Sofia Vrankovitza (one of the most important witnesses) on this subject.

The witness Atanas Oghlou Dimitri had deposed that eighteen men who had gone out to Mollah Ali to give up the arms were massacred; the truth of this Ali Effendi denied, as also he did the truth of Sofia's statement respecting the roasting of the Tchorbadji Triandaphil, which, he said, was unsupported by other testimony.

He again denied that the arms had been given up; and said that one Anastasi, who had been sent out to parley, and who was killed, must have met his death at the hands of the insurgents.

He ended by saying that the Batak witnesses were not to be believed, as they were rebels and interested parties; and that the evidence of the Koroudji Selim was unworthy of credence, as he was a liar, and thief, and a ravisher of women.

One of the prisoners, Kutchuk Halil, had deposed that he had seen Ahmed Agha standing among the crowd when the last 200 men were separated from the rest and sent away with Ahmed Tchaoush, of Kara Boulak, who had them massacred at the church.

Kutchuk Halil now strenuously denied ever having said anything of the sort, and Ali Effendi demanded that he should be again confronted with Ahmed Agha, but the President refused to accept his proposal.

This incident ended the trial of Ahmed Agha for the day, Ali Effendi reserving to himself the right of making some more remarks upon the case at the next sitting.

The trial of Ahmed Tchaoush was then resumed, and after certain depositions had been read, Ali Effendi stated in his defence that the man was never a leader of the Bashi-Bazouks, the real Chief of the band had been Salih Tchaoush, who had been killed. All the time the fighting had been going on Ahmed Tchaoush had stopped in a hut at Yeni Mahallé. As regards some sheep, which Ahmed Tchaoush is accused of having stolen, he found them scattered about the country, and only took them to deliver them up to the authorities.

Finally, Ali Effendi said his client was not a man to become a leader of Bashi-Bazouks, as he was ignorant and timid.

The day's proceedings then terminated. Ali Effendi's defence on this day was characterized by its extreme weakness and by many flagrant contradictions.

The Commission having now decided to visit the districts north of the Balkans after finishing its labours in this province, it was thought prudent to take measures to prevent the escape of Deli Nedjib Effendi and Sadoullah Effendi, the two leaders of Bashi-Bazouks who destroyed Seloi Yenikeui. A telegram was consequently sent to the Vali of Rustchuk asking that they might be put under arrest or surveillance; the answer, however, was that, as the individuals in question were men of good family, the arrest would create a bad impression, and that, moreover, it was not probable that they would endeavour to escape.

At any rate if, when the Commission requires these men, they are not forthcoming, the Vali should be held personally responsible.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER BARING.

Inclosure 2 in No. 74.

Mr. Baring to Sir H. Elliot.

Philippopoli, December 19, 1876.

Sir,

THE public trial of the leader of Bashi-Bazouks who destroyed Batak was continued on Sunday the 17th instant.

After the reading of the *procès-verbal* of the previous day's proceedings Ali Effendi said that he wished to call attention to some inaccuracies in it, but on being told to proceed with his remarks he replied that he must examine the document first, as, owing to its great length, he was unable to speak entirely from memory.

The President consequently told him he must give in his remarks in writing at the next sitting, and must finish his defence of Ahmed Agha; to this Ali Effendi replied that before correcting the *procès-verbaux* he could not do so, but the President informed him that he was merely endeavouring to waste time.

Ali Effendi consequently read a speech in favour of Ahmed Agha, which had been evidently prepared by other heads than his.

He said that Batak was the centre of the insurrection, and that Ahmed Agha having been sent by the Government to suppress it, acted as any other officer would have done.

Ahmed Agha deserved great credit for having saved the movable property of the villagers from the flames, as his responsibility would have been great had it all been burnt.

Had I not heard this statement myself I could hardly have believed that a man could be found possessed of sufficient impudence to bring forward such an audacious argument.

Ali Effendi then reverted to the old question of Ahmed Agha's right to claim trial by court martial, but the President stopped him by telling him that he could not enter into that matter, as it had already been settled by superior authority.

The Commission then proposed to try the case of Alish Pehlivan, who had previously stated his intention of conducting his own defence, but, when called upon, he said he had entrusted the task to Ali Effendi, who of course said that, as he had only

been informed of Alish's intention the same day, he must have time granted to him for preparation.

The case was accordingly postponed till to-day, and that of Mitto Bektash proceeded with.

Your Excellency is aware of the dreadful charges against this man, which are supported by several witnesses, one of them by a Turk, Abdi Tchaoush.

Ali Effendi made a very short defence, merely denying the truth of the evidence, and stating that Mitto Bektash was never in the village at all. It is pretty well proved by the statement of Ahmed Agha himself that this man was the real leader of the Bashi-Bazouks of Rakitovo.

After this case was finished that of Kutchuk Halil was commenced. He stands accused of having robbed a Greek named Kutshuk Georgi of a sum of money at Batak. Ali Effendi, in his defence, said that the amount that passed between them had been greatly exaggerated by Georgi, who had only given Kutchuk Halil a small sum as a reward for having saved his life. The prisoner had also saved the lives of twenty-four Bulgarians, whom he had kept in his house for two whole months. Moreover, the case was one for a civil Court to deal with.

When Ali Effendi finished his remarks the sitting was adjourned till to-day, when the President read a note he had received from the former, stating that he was not able to attend the Court that day.

Alish Pehlivan was then called up, and told that as his counsel had chosen to absent himself, he must undertake his own defence, as he had originally intended doing. Against this the prisoner protested, and a long discussion ensued as to the course which should be pursued.

At last it was decided that the sitting should be postponed till to-morrow, and Alish Pehlivan agreed that if Ali Effendi did not attend, he would defend himself.

Ali Effendi's only object throughout the trials has been to gain time, and, on the whole, his plan has succeeded tolerably well.

Ever since he began his defence he has been, I am told, in constant communication with some of the Beys of this place, who are making great efforts to obtain the acquittal of Ahmed Agha, and now they have applied to the Porte to allow an appeal to be lodged against any sentence passed by the Commission.

If possible, the Commission intend commencing the public trial of Tossoun Bey on Saturday next.

Raif Effendi arrived here on Saturday night from Adrianople, and left again this morning, the avowed object of his mission being to report upon the advisability of appointing Christian Kaimakams in some of the new Cazas which are to be created, and of placing a certain number of Christians in the police force.

I have, however, heard it said that his chief object was to induce the Bulgarians to forward a petition to the Porte to the effect that they had no wish for foreign intervention in their affairs; but I cannot guarantee the truth of this statement.

In order to avoid all danger from the Mussulmans of Dochat and Tchepine wreaking their vengeance on the inhabitants of Batak in case Ahmed Agha is condemned, I have strongly recommended Saadoullah Bey to cause a small body of troops to be sent to the latter village, and his Excellency has promised me that this would be done at once.

I have also requested that measures may be taken for the protection of the village of Petuch, which lies near the frontier of the Sofia vilayet, as the Turks of Isladi and other villages have been showing a most lawless spirit, and continual robberies are being committed in the neighbourhood; in fact, the state of public security is worse in that district than in any other part of the country.

Saadoullah Bey received a telegram to-day from the Porte, to the effect that instructions were being sent to him how he was to deal with the Bulgarian prisoners whose cases I have already mentioned to your Excellency in previous despatches.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER BARING.

Inclosure 3 in No. 74.

Mr. Baring to Sir H. Elliot.

Philippopoli, December 21, 1876.

Sir,

THE Commission sat yesterday to try Alish Pehlivan, the last of the prisoners implicated in the Batak massacre.

Before commencing the proceedings it was thought necessary to re-examine Ahmed Agha, who had stated in his deposition that Alish Pehlivan was present when the villagers gave up their arms, and also when the people were taken out of the church, but he contradicted his previous assertions and said he had been mistaken. It was, therefore, not thought necessary to confront the two prisoners.

Alish Pehlivan was then brought in, and some depositions were read relative to his having carried off cattle from Batak.

The prisoner strongly denied the truth of this assertion, and defied anybody to prove that he had stolen anything.

Ali Effendi, who had thought it advisable to attend to defend his client, then began his defence by stating that neither Ahmed Agha nor anyone else was justified in asserting that Alish was a leader of Bashi-Bazouks, as no document confirming the statement could be produced.

It was true that Alish had been to Batak, but he had only gone there with Yakoff and Anton (a Bulgarian and a Greek), who have given important evidence, from motives of humanity, to save some money which these men had hidden when the fighting began.

For this simple and laudable act he could not now be accused of murder and robbery; he was a man of property, and both Christians and Mussulmans could bear witness to the good reputation he had always enjoyed; therefore crimes of the above description were utterly foreign to his nature.

As regards a note which Alish had received from a Turk, and which proves clearly enough that he had carried off some cattle, Ali Effendi denied that it demonstrated anything, and that the charge could only be proved by the production of a document bearing Alish's own seal.

After this the deposition of Atarás Oglou Dimitri was read, wherein it was stated that the witness had heard Alish Pehlivan give orders to his men respecting the killing of the people in the church.

Here the prisoner took up his own defence and denied that he was ever a leader, or that he had given orders, but that all the same he had done everything in his power to restrain the Bashi-Bazouks, who, however, would not listen to him.

Another of Demitri's depositions was then read, in which it was stated that he and others were taken out of the church by Ahmed Agha and Alish Pehlivan. The latter denied the truth of this, saying that not only had he not been to the church, but that he had never been inside the village.

Ali Effendi then resumed his arguments by declaring that all the persons who had given evidence against his client were enemies of his who wished to do him injury. He then enlarged upon the serious nature of the insurrection, saying that the rebels had wished to overturn a Government which had stood for five centuries, and that they had only been treated according to their merits.

Had it not been for the gallant efforts of those public benefactors, the Bashi-Bazouks, the Empire would have been placed in great jeopardy. The law could not be invoked for the protection of rebels from the consequences of their rash and wicked acts. No plundering had taken place; the Bashi-Bazouks who, under the auspices of the Sultan, marched out to do their duty were well provided with everything, and had no need to supply their wants by pillaging.

Ali Effendi then demanded that as Ahmed Agha had stated that Alish was a leader of Bashi-Bazouks, and as this notion was an erroneous one, the two should be confronted, but the Commission thought this unnecessary.

The proceedings then terminated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER BARING.

Inclosure 4 in No. 74.

Mr. Baring to Sir H. Elliot.

Philippopoli, December 23, 1876.

Sir,

ON the 24th ultimo I had the honour to bring to your Excellency's notice the case of three girls of Batak who had been converted to Islam, and who had been brought before the Commission, and I then stated that the final settlement of the case had been adjourned to allow the relations to come from Batak.

One of the girls, Guina by name, was soon after visited by her sister who, when they were alone, very soon persuaded her to return to Christianity. She appeared before the Commission, and was examined in the presence of the Bulgarian Bishop, and I have the honour to inclose a translation of her deposition.

She is still here, as it has not been thought quite advisable to send her back to her native place.

The other two girls were visited by their female friends and relations some time after, and somewhat stormy scenes were the consequence of these interviews. They both utterly refused to recognize their relations, and avowed their firm intention of remaining in the Moslem faith.

The matter may, therefore, be considered at an end.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER BARING.

Inclosure 5 in No. 74.

Deposition of Guina, a Girl of Batak, who was forced to become a Moslem.

(Translation.)

Q. How old are you?—*A.* Fifteen.

Q. How did they carry you off from Batak, and where did they take you to?—After the destruction of the village they took us outside with a crowd of people, and after we had remained there an hour or two, Mehemet with two or three of his companions came and took me away.

Q. Was there any one else by you when they carried you away, and if so, what did they do seeing you taken away from them, and did you go willingly?—*A.* My sister Mitro was present there weeping at the time. I was unwilling to go with Mehemet and was weeping also, but he carried me off by force.

Q. Where did he take you to from thence?—*A.* He took me to the mountains, and after having stayed there one night, the following morning he took me straight to his house, in a village called Hussein Doa, in the district of Nevrokop.

Q. Were the companions of Mehemet with him on the way?—*A.* There was already a crowd on the way, which gradually increased. Mehemet's companions, too, were with us, but they also, having each taken a girl, separated from us on the road.

Q. How many girls did the companions of Mehemet carry off?—*A.* Mehemet's companions carried off one girl besides me from our village, whom Talib, Mehemet's brother, took for himself. And so we all went together to a village. The name of the girl was Vankoi, and now Vanko, Talib, and I have all come here (Philippopoli) together.

Q. Did Mehemet go to bed with you in the mountains at night during the journey?—*A.* Mehemet did not go to bed with me during our journey.

Q. Did Mehemet ever go to bed with you up to now, and if so, when and where did he do so for the first time?—*A.* Mehemet went to bed with me after the Nikiah (marriage) was over, *i.e.* after it was written.

Q. How many days after your arrival at Hussein Ova did you go to bed together?—*A.* Mehemet tried about one week to get married to me, but knowing that he had already a wife, I would not give my consent to it. I asked him to send me to some other place as a maid-servant, but he answered me that he would rather murder me than let me go away; therefore I was obliged by force to remain with him.

Q. Has Mehemet still got another wife?—*A.* Yes, he has; her name is Hatigeh.

Q. Who wrote your Nikiah, and who were there at the time it was written? and what did they say and ask you there?—*A.* I was told that the man who wrote it was a Khaja, and there was a great crowd there. I do not remember if they asked me any questions, but even if they did, I did not say anything to them.

Q. What did the Hodja ask you while he wrote the Nikiah?—*A.* I was never asked anything while the crowd was there, neither before the Nikiah was written, nor even while it was being written.

Q. Did they not ask whether you wanted Mehmet, and whether you would accept him as a husband?—*A.* No.

Q. Were you too among the crowd then?—*A.* I was in the room then.

What persons were there with you?—*A.* There were Turkish and Pomak women with me.

Q. How did you know the Hodja was writing the Nikiah outside?—*A.* I was told so; and later on they took me to the place where the Hodja was.

Q. What did they tell you there?—Q. A conversation passed between us, but I do remember what we said. In the beginning I insisted that I would not be married, but afterwards the women persuaded me.

Q. Did they not take you anywhere else besides Hussein Ova?—A. We went to the village of Mehemet's sister on being invited there.

Q. Did they never take you to the local authority?—A. No.

Q. What name did they give you while there?—A. Zeinab.

Q. Who gave you that name, and when was it given?—A. The people of the house gave it me. Mehemet wanted to give me some other name, but his mother, wife, and sister called me Zeinab.

Q. Used Mehemet, his mother, or sister to say their prayers in the house?—A. Yes.

Q. Did they make you say prayers too?—A. They used to tell me to do so, but I did not do it, because I did not know how to say it.

Q. Since you got married to Mehemet do you want to live with him?—(After thinking a little) Yes.

Q. Do you want to live with his other wife, Hatigeh? Say it; do not be afraid; nobody threatens you here, you are free to say what you think?—A. I was compelled then to consent to it, otherwise I do not want it, and I do not wish to live with Mehemet.

Q. But you said you wanted Mehemet for husband; were you mistaken then?—A. I said so through fear of being murdered, and that was the reason I consented to it, otherwise I do not wish living with Mehemet under any circumstances.

Q. Where had you hidden yourself before the Pomaks took you out of Batak village?—A. I was in the church.

Q. Who took you out of the church?—A. We went out ourselves.

Q. How many days did you remain in the church?—A. We stayed there two days, and on the day that they murdered my father and brother I went out of the church to save myself.

Q. What did you go into the church for?—A. We went there to save ourselves.

Q. Did anyone die in the church during those two days that you were there?—A. No, no one died in the church before the Bashi-Bazouks entered.

Q. Where and when did they murder your father and brother?—A. The Bashi-Bazouks murdered them in the court of the church when they entered.

Q. When did the Bashi-Bazouks go into the church?—A. About two hours before sunset.

Q. When did you leave the church?—A. We left after sunrise next morning.

Q. Did the Bashi-Bazouks stay in the court of the church all night till next morning?—A. They were in the church all night till next morning.

Q. What did they do all the night?—A. They fired and killed people all night long.

No. 75.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 6, 1877.)

(No. 1397.)

Constantinople, December 28, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose the copy of a Memorandum which the Greek Minister has been directed by his Government to put into the hands of all the members of the Conference, respecting the position in which the Greek Government and race will be placed by special favours being granted to the Slavs.

M. Coundouriotis was much excited in presenting this document, and represented that if Greece was now placed in a disadvantageous position, it was owing to her having followed the frequent representations made by Her Majesty's Government to observe a strict neutrality in the struggle going on in European Turkey.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 75.

Memorandum.

AU moment où les Représentants des Grandes Puissances se trouvent réunis à Constantinople à l'effet d'améliorer le sort des populations Chrétiennes de la Turquie, le

Gouvernement de Sa Majesté le Roi des Hellènes croit de son devoir d'appeler leur attention sur la situation des sujets Grecs de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan.

Cependant, nous tenons beaucoup à le constater dès le début, cette démarche ne doit pas être attribuée à la prétention d'exercer, comme on nous l'a souvent reproché à tort, un protectorat sur les Grecs de la Turquie, mais à la nécessité où nous nous trouvons de prévenir à temps le contre-coup des troubles de toute nature qui pourraient agiter les populations Grecques de l'Empire Ottoman. L'histoire de ces derniers temps ne fournirait que trop d'exemples à l'appui de cette assertion.

D'un autre côté, on ne saurait oublier non plus qu'en élevant la voix en faveur de ses frères de race et de réligion, la Grèce paye en même temps une dette sacrée de reconnaissance aux provinces Grecques, soumises au Gouvernement Ottoman, qui, toutes, ont pris part à la longue lutte à laquelle elle doit, non moins qu'à la bienveillance et à la justice de l'Empire, son indépendance et sa liberté.

C'est cette justice et cette bienveillance que la Grèce implore de nouveau à cette heure solennelle en faveur des pays Grecs restés sous la domination de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan.

Si l'on admet, comme la Sublime Porte elle-même semble le reconnaître par son zèle à introduire des réformes radicales dans son administration, que l'insurrection des provinces du nord de l'Empire a été provoquée par le régime en vigueur et les malheurs et les abus qu'il entraîne forcément, il serait oiseux de s'attacher à démontrer que ces malheurs et ces abus frappent également toutes les provinces de l'Empire Ottoman et qu'ils pèsent même d'un poids plus lourd sur les populations Grecques que l'état de civilisation plus avancée où elles se trouvent, rend plus sensibles aux maux des races déshéritées.

Nous ne saurions nier, il est vrai, que ces mêmes populations Grecques ne se soient abstenues de protester les armes à la main durant la crise actuelle; mais cette attitude, qui contraste si fort avec leurs antécédents, n'a pas besoin d'être expliquée aux Grandes Puissances, qui en connaissent mieux que personne la vraie et seule cause.

Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté le Roi des Hellènes avait le devoir de conformer, pour tout ce qui concerne les Grecs de Turquie, sa conduite à celle des Grandes Puissances, qui avaient manifesté le désir de maintenir la paix en Orient, ou tout au moins de localiser l'insurrection. C'est ainsi seulement qu'une conflagration générale a pu être évitée.

L'esprit de haute justice qui anime les Gouvernements des Grandes Puissances et leurs Représentants dans la Conférence, ne saurait donc leur permettre de tirer de cette conduite, ainsi imposée, un argument pour laisser les Grecs dans une situation moins avantageuse que celle qu'on accorderait à d'autres populations.

Il ne faudrait pas non plus perdre de vue que si nos conseils ont pu être suivis par les Grecs, sujets de la Sublime Porte, c'est que, comme nous, ils avaient la ferme conviction que si l'Europe, persuadée de l'inefficacité des réformes promulguées jusqu'ici par le Gouvernement Ottoman, se décidait à intervenir encore une fois, elle prendrait des mesures générales envers tous les Chrétiens indistinctement, ainsi que cela a été soutenu dans d'autres circonstances par la diplomatie Européenne.

D'ailleurs, la Sublime Porte elle-même vient de reconnaître, semblerait-il, qu'il est aussi équitable que nécessaire d'établir une égalité parfaite de droits entre tous ses sujets Chrétiens.

Aussi, cette haute assemblée fait elle-même à l'encontre du double but qu'elle poursuit, c'est-à-dire du but humanitaire et du but politique, en négligeant l'élément Grec ou en méconnaissant à son détriment, et de quelque manière que ce fût, le droit historique et les nécessités géographiques en dehors desquels tout ne serait que trouble et confusion pour l'avenir dans la presqu'île des Balkans.

C'est donc au nom de la justice aussi bien que dans le but d'éloigner les dangers qu'un pareil abandon des intérêts des Grecs, sujets Ottomans, ne manquerait pas de faire surgir que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté le Roi des Hellènes fait appel à la haute sagesse des Gouvernements représentés à la Conférence de Constantinople.

Ils ne tarderont pas à se convaincre que des considérations de l'ordre le plus élevé justifient pleinement sa démarche et que c'est dans l'intention de co-opérer à l'œuvre de pacification entreprise par les Cabinets Européens qu'il prend la liberté de leur soumettre ces observations. Les Grandes Puissances ne sauraient mieux assurer l'accomplissement de leur noble mission qu'en étendant à tous les Chrétiens, et particulièrement à ceux de race Grecque, les mesures qu'elles conseilleraient dans leur justice et dans leur prévoyance à la Sublime Porte pour rendre le calme et la prospérité aux Provinces récemment insurgées de l'Empire Ottoman.

No. 76.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6, 1877.)

(No. 1399.) *Constantinople, December 29, 1876.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that Major-General Sir A. Kemball returned here on the 21st instant from Nisch, having terminated his work in connection with the demarkation of the neutral zone on the Servian frontier.

I cannot allow this opportunity to pass without bearing witness to the great ability and tact which Sir Arnold has displayed in carrying out your Lordship's instructions during the time that he has remained at the head-quarters of the Turkish army, and I venture to hope that Her Majesty's Government, in taking the same view of his services, may see fit to communicate to him their appreciation of his zeal and activity.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 77.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 7, 1877.)

(No. 54. Political. Confidential.) *Bucharest, December 28, 1877.*

My Lord,

IT will be interesting to your Lordship to know that, within the last few days, the Austrian Government has sounded the Government of Prince Charles as to the attitude ("penchant") of Roumania should Austria desire or decide upon occupying these Principalities with an imposing military force.

M. Bratiano seems to have answered somewhat vaguely; his sympathies have always been anti-Austrian, and the Cabinet is, at the present moment, extremely bitter against Count Andrassy for interdicting the circulation of the "Romanulu" in Hungary, Transylvania, &c., the "Romanulu" being the general organ of M. Bratiano, and being edited by M. Rosetti, the President of the Chamber.

Prince Charles, in reply to the communication of M. Bosizio, the Austrian Acting Agent, said that he should prefer an Austrian to a Russian occupation; that the former had no ulterior designs, and was in general less likely to cause permanent detriment to the country, but that his Highness must have a precise offer, and with this in view M. Balatchano, the Roumanian Agent at Vienna, has been ordered to return to his post without delay.

An overture on the part of Austria to occupy this country could but be in direct hostility and opposition to Russia, who, under certain circumstances, may desire to pass through Roumania, and such a step seems somewhat inconsistent with what is doing at Constantinople, but your Lordship may, perhaps, through information from other sources, have a direct clue to the proceeding.

While all this was going on, there arrived the news of the Turkish Constitution, and the Article stating that, in certain provinces, the head of the Government will receive his investiture from the Sultan, &c.; and some expressions by which the Roumanians conceive themselves to be termed Ottoman subjects have caused a violent feeling against the Porte, among all shades of political parties.

The Prince on Tuesday, after dinner, at the Palace, spoke to me in a most excited and, I may add, almost childish tone on the subject.

His Highness stated to me that he should ascertain whether the above was intended to refer to Roumania, adding, "Dans ce cas là, ils auront à faire avec nous."

I have little doubt that we shall shortly hear of M. Jonesco forwarding an indiscreet, if not a ridiculous, note to the Porte, while the Ministers will, of course, make political capital by blustering in the Chamber and in the press.

The effect of the above incident is to entirely turn the balance in favour of a Russian bias; as Austria, and more particularly Hungary, is regarded in this country as favouring, if not absolutely favourable to, Turkish interests.

As your Lordship has no doubt noticed, this Government, by dint of missions abroad, Commercial Conventions, the recognition by the Porte of the name of Roumania, and various other small devices, has been endeavouring to arrive almost at independence, as it were, through the back door; and the present tenor of the Turkish Constitution is a

rebuff in a contrary sense, which is peculiarly wounding to so vain a nature as that of the Roumanians.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 78.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6, 1877.)

(No. 495. Confidential.) *Rome, December 30, 1876.*

My Lord,

I GATHER from incidental conversations which I have recently had with the Secretary-General of the Foreign Department that the relations between Italy and Austria are not on so cordial a footing as might be desirable.

This condition of things, according to Count Tornielli, arises from causes over which the Italian Government have no control.

Count Tornielli asserts that there is a party in Austria, with the Archduke Albert at its head, which has never forgotten the events of 1866, and has always opposed the policy of cultivating the friendship of Italy which has since been followed, especially by Count Andrassy; that this party has always contended that no advantage was ever likely to accrue to Austria from the Italian alliance, and since it has become known that Italy would object to any extension of Austria on the side of the Adriatic provinces of Turkey, and the question of incorporating the Trentino with Italy has been agitated in some portion of the Italian press, the action of this party has become more vigorous, and the reproaches which they address to Count Andrassy more frequent. This, Count Tornielli declares, has brought Count Andrassy into a state of irritation against Italy, and this irritation is increased every time there is a mention of the Trentino in the Italian papers; and, unfortunately, there is still frequent mention of it amongst the democratic press in the north of Italy.

Now the Italian Government, Count Tornielli contends, is quite powerless to apply a remedy to this state of things. They cannot control the action of the party in Austria opposed to Italy; they are unable to do anything to calm down the irritation in Count Andrassy's mind, because it is beyond their power to curb in any way the liberty of writing in the newspapers. All that they can do is to disclaim in the papers which generally support the Ministry any ambitious desires on the part of the Government, and this has, I believe, been recently done by a newspaper, the "Bersagliere," which is supposed to belong more especially to Baron Nicotera. The consequence has been a war of words between this newspaper and the "Ragione" of Milan.

I asked Count Tornielli if he thought the state of feeling described was the cause of so much time elapsing without the appointment of an Austrian Ambassador in Rome.

He replied that Count Andrassy had informed the Italian Ambassador at Vienna not long since that the delay in the appointment arose not from political motives, but in consequence of the difficulty of finding a fitting person to fill the post.

I told Count Tornielli that unless I was mistaken Count Andrassy had a very strong conviction that the allusion to acquiring the Trentino, and other Italian portions of the Austro-Hungarian dominions, had not been confined to the Italian press only, but that the Italian Government itself had taken steps to ascertain in certain quarters what sort of chance of success such a pretention on the part of Italy might have.

Count Tornielli declared in the most positive terms, as your Lordship will recollect my having reported Signor Melegari as having done also, that the Italian Government had never brought this question forward at all.

Count Tornielli said that it would have been much more just to have suspicions of the late than of the present Ministry, for M. Visconti Venosta did, in a note written in 1866, which was well known, reserve the right of Italy to claim eventually the Trentino as belonging to the Italian Kingdom. Count Tornielli added that if his advice had been followed the opportunity afforded by the interpellation addressed to the President of the Council, respecting the arrest of three Italians in the Tyrol on the presentation of the Budget of the Minister for Foreign Affairs (see my despatch No. 480 of the 19th instant), should have been taken to make an explicit declaration which should have put an end once for all to suspicions as to the covetous designs of the Italian Government.

Count Tornielli hopes, in the interests of the good relations between Austria and Italy, that nothing may occur to disturb Count Andrassy's tenure of office.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 79.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6.)

(No. 7. Confidential.)
Vienna, January 3, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to Colonel Mansfield's political despatch No. 54, marked Confidential, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that M. de Balatchano, the Roumanian Agent, has returned from Bucharest, and he assures me in the most positive manner that no overtures have been made to his Government by Austria, with a view to her armed occupation of the Principalities. About three weeks ago, however, he said, Austria offered to guarantee the territorial integrity of Roumania and her present political position, on the condition of her maintaining a strict neutrality in the event of war between Russia and Turkey, which was understood to mean that, though she could not prevent the free passage of a Russian army through her territory, she would give it no material assistance or support. It does not appear, however, that any arrangement has yet been come to.

On my observing that it appeared his Government were disposed to take exception to some articles of the new Turkish Constitution, he treated it as a question which in no way concerned Roumania.

He stated, however, that the unwillingness of the Conference at Constantinople to consider the claims which the Principalities had submitted to the Porte have caused great dissatisfaction at Bucharest, where it is now considered that the only way to obtain the concessions which the Government have a right to ask for, will be by following the example of Servia, should circumstances offer them an opportunity of doing so.

M. Balatchano's statement as to the overtures of Austria being so different from what Colonel Mansfield has reported, I shall endeavour to ascertain whether there has not been some foundation for the information received by Colonel Mansfield.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 80.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6.)

(No. 6. Very Confidential.)
Paris, January 5, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Duc Decazes read to me last evening a telegram which he had just received from the Comte de Chaudordy. It was dated yesterday 2 P.M., and had evidently been dispatched before the sitting of the Conference. The substance of it, so far as I can recollect it, was somewhat as follows:—

"A secret Council was held by the Turkish Government yesterday, at which it was resolved to reject the eight points 'que vous connissez.' This resolution is to be announced to us at the Conference to-day. I shall support the opinion that we should enter into discussion, and that it may still be possible to come to an understanding by mutual concessions. I shall have Austria with me, 'et j'entraînerai l'Italie. Le Marquis de Salisbury est peu conciliant pour les Turcs.' Russia wishes to retreat but does not know how. I point out to General Ignatiew that her best way is to retreat under cover of Europe.

"I am charged to draw up the identic note to be sent to the Porte after we are embarked on board our ships. Each Representative wishes it to be so drawn up as to commit his Government as little as possible.

"The Comte de Zichy wishes a note to be prepared to be presented to the Porte by Lord Salisbury, in which France, Austria, and Italy would concur.

"The German Representative speaks of united action between him and me, on the ground that our two Governments have precisely the same objects in view, that is to say, the maintenance of peace and the avoiding of any engagement for the future.

"I shall use my best endeavours to promote conciliation and to prevent a rupture."

Having finished reading the telegram, the Duc Decazes asked me what I thought of it.

I answered that as I had no knowledge of the details of the negotiations at Constantinople, a great part of it was hardly intelligible to me.

The Duke said that he himself looked upon the news it brought as bad; and he told me that the proposals of the Plenipotentiaries had been made so moderate, had in fact been so nearly effaced, that he had hoped to hear that they had been accepted by the Turks.

He gave me to understand that not only the Emperor Alexander, but Prince Gortchakow also, was now anxiously seeking the means of preserving peace at almost any price.

The Duc Decazes went on to say that it seemed to him that General Ignatiew was trying at Constantinople to mask a retreat by numerous small devices, instead of retiring in a simple and dignified way under the cover of Europe, as the Comte de Chaudordy had suggested.

The Duke added that, for his own part, he had earnestly represented to Prince Orloff, the Russian Ambassador here, that Russia might withdraw without any loss of reputation from her present embarrassing position by maintaining her own opinions as to the measures required in Turkey, but saying that as to the question of enforcing them she would rather give way than break up the union of the Great Powers.

Going back to the telegram, the Duc Decazes observed that he could not feel so very sure that Prince Bismarck desired the maintenance of peace between Russia and Turkey.

I had learnt in the morning from your Lordship's despatch No. 4 of the 2nd instant that the French Ambassador in London, speaking apparently as the organ of his Government, had expressed to you an opinion that the absolute rejection by the Porte of the proposals of the Powers would be an insult to Europe, which it would be impossible to pass over. The Duc Decazes made no allusion to this in conversing with me, nor did he mention the suggestion that the Conference might be continued in some place out of Turkey if it broke up at Constantinople. He was equally silent on the question which has been mooted with regard to the signature of a Protocol by the Plenipotentiaries.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 81.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6.)

(No. 7.)
Paris, January 5, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Duc Decazes told me last evening that Sadig Pasha, the Ottoman Ambassador here, had asked him a few days ago what he thought of the new Turkish Constitution.

The Duke said that, after a few passing remarks on the document itself, he had proceeded to ask Sadig Pasha to what part of the Empire it was to be applied. He had observed that of course it could have no effect in Servia or Roumania. Was it intended to introduce it into Crete? What about the Lebanon?

With regard to this last district the Duke had, he told me, reminded Sadig Pasha that it was already in possession of institutions which appeared to work fairly well, and which, having been recorded in a Protocol signed by the Great Powers, could not be be altered without the consent of those Powers.

The Duc Decazes proceeded to say that, after this conversation, he had been not a little surprised to hear from M. Tricou, the French Consul-General at Beyrout, that a telegram had been received there from Constantinople, stating that the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, in speaking to the Turkish Ambassador at Paris, had expressed the opinion that the new Constitution should be adopted by the Lebanon.

The Duke concluded by observing that the Roumanian Government appeared to have been getting up an ill advised agitation about this Constitution instead of assuming at once, as good sense would have dictated, that it in no degree concerned Roumania.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 82.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6.)

(Telegraphic.)
Berlin, January 5, 1877.

GERMAN Government do not think it desirable to continue the Conference in some Italian or other city after the Ambassadors have left Constantinople, nor will they sign the act proposed by General Ignatiew without having read it.

Armistice affords ample time for Turkey and Russia to reflect before rushing into war.

No. 83.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, January 6, 1877.*

COUNT ANDRASSY leaves to-day for Pesth, and the newspapers report that Austrian Ambassador at Berlin is on his way from Berlin to reside in Hungary.

No. 84.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6, at night.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, January 6, 1877.*

I HAVE to-day sent following telegram to Ambassador at Constantinople :—

"(Confidential.)

"Ministerial crisis probable.

"Can your Excellency induce the Porte to delay sending an immediate answer to Roumanian protest, very important."

No. 85.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 8, 1877.)

(No. 16.) *Tiflis, December 24, 1876.*

My Lord,

SIX thousand infantry, 1,200 cavalry have lately gone to Erivan; 3,000 more infantry are also going there. Some also gone to Yori, near Tiflis; two regiments will remain at Tiflis. Reserve arriving daily. Grand Duke goes to Alexandropol at end of week; 800 men at work in arsenal pontoons, and large quantities of gun-carriage wheels are stored there. The son and daughter of the late Mayor at Tiflis have been arrested for having been concerned in conspiracy at St. Petersburgh. Four other influential persons also arrested. Envoy on the part of the Shah of Persia has, I am told, passed through Tiflis for St. Petersburgh.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. RICKETTS.

No. 86.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 8, 1877.)

(No. 17.) *Tiflis, December 27, 1876.*

My Lord,

FOUR battalions of 19th division, at 520 men per battalion, in all, 2,080, left to-day for Erivan. Force there will be now about 10,000. I am informed that a large staff of officers left this for Persian frontier in April last; that the right bank of the River Etrek has been surveyed, and a line of forts is being constructed, but I cannot discover at what exact points these works are going on. This might be known in Persia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. T. RICKETTS.

No. 87.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 8, 1877.)

(No. 611.) *St. Petersburgh, December 30, 1876.*

My Lord,

NUMEROUS addresses have been lately presented to the Emperor from the towns, provinces, and public bodies of Russia, expressive of their loyalty and devotion, in reply to the speech addressed by the Emperor at Moscow.

No. 86*.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 8, 1877.)

(No. 610.) *St. Petersburgh, December 28, 1876.*

My Lord,

AT an interview I had to-day with Prince Gortchakow, his Highness stated in reply to my inquiry that his reports from Constantinople were not favourable.

He said that General Ignatiew had reported that the Sultan hesitates as to the acceptance of the proposals of the Conference, and appeared to fear the effect it would have on Turkish public opinion.

Midhat Pasha had confirmed this in conversation with General Ignatiew, affirming that the Empire would be exposed to less risk by a foreign war than by an internal insurrection.

It appears also that the Sultan is under the impression that his life would be in danger if he yielded to the demands of the Powers, and that he was more influenced by fear of the fanaticism of his own subjects than by the pressure of the foreign Powers.

Prince Gortchakow informed me that the Powers were acting in perfect concert, and had agreed together, in case that the Porte should refuse the proposals of the Conference, to withdraw their respective Ambassadors, leaving Chargé d'Affaires, who would be instructed to confine themselves strictly to the discharge of the current business, and not to treat of any political question.

Russia, his Highness said, would maintain an expectant attitude ("Parmi nu bras"). She would not cross the frontier unless circumstances should oblige her to do so; she would calmly await the course which Europe would decide to take.

Prince Gortchakow seemed to be under the impression that the Porte would refuse any prolongation of the armistice, and General Ignatiew had been accordingly instructed to propose to his co-Plenipotentiaries, previous to their leaving Constantinople, to notify to the Porte in a collective or identic note that the Powers would consider an attack on Servia or Montenegro as an attack against Europe.

From the general tenor of his Highness's language, I am disposed to think that should hostilities not be renewed, Russia will be content to remain passive without resorting to any immediate hostile action against Turkey, and to await the result of the moral pressure put on the Porte by the Powers.

If the Porte should finally agree to the proposals of the Conference, and be willing to record her acceptance of them in a formal Protocol, it is not improbable that Russia would accept it without further insisting on a foreign occupation as an indispensable guarantee; but Russia, I think, will not agree to substitute for the foreign occupation a Turkish military force beyond the garrisons of the Turkish fortresses as provided for by the resolution of the Conference.

Prince Gortchakow expressed a readiness to take into consideration any reasonable proposal which the Porte might make with a view to meet the resolutions of the Conference, and provided also that the initiative came from her.

The language of Prince Gortchakow was very moderate and conciliatory in regard to Turkey, and I could perceive in it an anxious desire to avoid war, and to escape from the embarrassing position in which Russia is placed.

His Highness appeared most to fear some impulsive act of fanaticism on the part of the Turks, which would force Russia to take immediate action for the protection of the Christians; but even then I suspect that Russia will not venture to act without previous communication with the Powers, as she would thereby risk to break up the European concert.

The desire to avoid war is daily increasing, and the serious illness of the Grand Duke Nicholas, the Commander-in-chief of the active army, renders the military position more embarrassing and the necessity of peace more urgent.

In the interest, therefore, of peace, it is important to prevent, if possible, the renewal of hostilities against Servia and Montenegro, and this can only be effected by the conclusion of a formal peace between the belligerents on the conditions proposed by the Powers, or by the prolongation of the armistice.

Could this be effected, hopes may be entertained that an arrangement based on the resolutions of the Conference may be finally accepted by the Porte, and that a war between Russia and Turkey may be happily averted.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

The most singular of these addresses worthy of notice is an address from the Mussulman clergy of Orenburg, of which I have the honour to annex a copy.

In requesting the Imperial Minister of the Interior to lay this address at His Majesty's feet, the Mufti of Orenburg adds that the community of religion with the Turks does not prevent them from deploring their misdeeds contrary to Allah; and that they should be grieved if the Russian Government could have any mistrust of the Russian Mussulman subjects on account of their community of religion with the Turks.

The Emperor, in thanking the Mufti and the Mahommedan clergy of Orenburg, declared that he entertained no doubts as to their fidelity and devotion.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure in No. 87.

Extract from the "Journal de St. Pétersbourg" of December $\frac{15}{27}$, 1876.

ON lit dans le "Messager Officiel":—

"Le Mufti d'Orenbourg, Selim-Ghireï-Teykelew, a transmis à M. le Ministre de l'Intérieur, pour qu'elle soit présentée à Sa Majesté l'Empereur, l'adresse ci-après du clergé Musulman d'Orenbourg, en accompagnant cet envoi de la lettre suivante:—

"'En qualité de représentant du clergé Mahométan, j'ai l'honneur de prier votre Excellence de déposer aux pieds de Sa Majesté l'Empereur l'adresse ci-jointe, et d'ajouter que la communauté de religion avec les Turcs ne nous empêche pas de déplorer leurs méfaits, contraires à Allah, et nous serions très affligés que le Gouvernement Russe pût avoir à l'égard des Musulmans Russes l'ombre d'un doute à cause de leur communauté de religion avec les Turcs.'

"*Adresse du Clergé Mahométan d'Orenbourg.*

"Sire,

"Les paroles prononcées à Moscou par votre Majesté Impériale, en présence des événements politiques de l'Orient, ont profondément pénétré dans les cœurs de vos fidèles sujets Musulmans; avec le clergé Mahométan d'Orenbourg j'ai prié et je prie le Tout-Puissant Allah, afin qu'il aide votre Majesté Impériale à réaliser ses justes desseins."

Sa Majesté a daigné recevoir cette adresse et faire remercier le Mufti et le clergé Mahométan d'Orenbourg, en leur déclarant que Sa Majesté ne doute pas de leurs sentiments de fidélité et de dévouement.

No. 88.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 8, 1877.)

(No. 616.)

St. Petersburgh, December 30, 1876.

My Lord,

THE Emperor of Russia received this morning a telegram from General Ignatiew, announcing the prolongation of the armistice to the 1st of March.

It appears that the proposal was made at the initiative of the Porte, and was assented to by the Plenipotentiaries. It has produced a very general satisfaction here.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 89.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 8.)

(No. 4.)

St. Petersburgh, January 2, 1877.

My Lord,

THE general tone of the Russian press, which some weeks ago was so vehement in favour of an immediate occupation of Bulgaria by Russia, has much calmed down, and has assumed a more pacific character.

I inclose an analysis of an article from the "Golos," as published in French by the

"Journal de St. Pétersbourg" of this morning, which represents very faithfully the opinions of the reasonable and sensible Russian politicians.

It argues that no prudent Government will launch into a war when the cost and risk are not equivalent to the advantages to be gained, which would be the case of a war with Turkey.

Russia, in undertaking a war for the protection of the Christian populations of Turkey, could not make this war support itself in a country already devastated, and which could offer no contribution to it.

If, therefore, the obstinacy of the Porte or the hesitation of the Cabinets should prolong the present state of crisis, which is becoming more and more onerous for the commercial and financial interests of all countries, or if fresh massacres should again arouse the indignation of Christian Europe, the Russian Government would then have to weigh on the one hand the sacrifices caused by such a state of things, and on the other the cost which immediate war would inspire, with a view to put an end to a situation become intolerable.

Your Lordship will perceive the difference between the foregoing language of the "Golos"—the most influential of the Russian organs—and that which only a few weeks ago was most violent in favour of coercive measures against Turkey.

Notwithstanding the great change of public opinion which has taken place here in a more peaceful sense, it must not be assumed that Russia will not actively intervene for the protection of the Christian populations or for the introduction of such reforms as the Powers have collectively agreed upon as necessary to ensure the tranquillity and good government of the Balkan Provinces.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 90.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 8.)

(No. 6. Confidential.) *Berlin, January 5, 1877.*

My Lord,

FROM a conversation I had with the Minister for Foreign Affairs I gather that the German Government do not think it desirable or useful to continue the Conference in some Italian or other town after the Ambassadors have left Constantinople, nor will they authorize the German Ambassador to sign the Protocol proposed by General Ignatiew without a full knowledge of the wording of that document.

The prolongation of the armistice affords ample time for Turkey and Russia to reflect before rushing into war, and for Turkey to propose a pacific solution which Russia could accept.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 91.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 8.)

(No. 9. Confidential.) *Berlin, January 6, 1877.*

My Lord,

IN obedience to your Lordship's instruction No. 761 of the 28th of December last, I have communicated to the Emperor and Prince Bismarck, through the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the substance of your Lordship's observations to the French and Russian Ambassadors, recorded in your Lordship's despatch to Lord Lyons No. 1046 of the 21st of December, and to Lord A. Loftus No. 631 of the same date, respecting the attitude of Her Majesty's Government as to the acceptance or rejection by the Porte of the proposals of the Conference.

In thanking your Lordship for this communication, his Excellency said that he would submit it at once to His Majesty, through the Chancellor.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 92.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 8.)

(No. 4. Most Confidential.) *Berlin, January 4, 1877.*

My Lord.

THE Austrian Ambassador's journey to Vienna at the invitation of Count Andrassy, and his Excellency's frequent interviews with Prince Bismarck since his return to Berlin, have given rise to a good deal of speculation, but their exact object has not been disclosed.

Among the various interpretations given to this Austro-German exchange of ideas I have heard one, for the accuracy of which I cannot vouch, but which I am inclined to think correct. It is as follows:—

Count Andrassy, finding that Russia, by her conciliatory attitude in the Conference, has gained the moral co-operation of the Powers, which Turkey is losing by her resistance to their advice, is alarmed at the influence Russia may acquire over the Slav populations, to the detriment of Austria, who owns 16,000,000 Slav subjects.

Count Andrassy is described as being deeply and seriously annoyed at the practical understanding established between the Marquis of Salisbury and General Ignatiew, which he had flattered himself the traditional policy of England would have rendered impossible.

War between Russia and Turkey, he feels, would be extremely inconvenient to Austria; and if it were to be localized, and the Powers to persist in withholding material assistance from Turkey, it is more than probable that in the long run Russia would gain advantages which Austria would have reason to regret.

Encouraged by Prince Bismarck's speeches in favour of Austria, Count Andrassy appears to have instructed the Austrian Ambassador to sound the German Chancellor as to the amount of support, moral or material, Austria could expect from Germany if, by threatening to take up the cause of Turkey, she arrested the advance of Russia altogether.

Events having now clearly proved that Russia is financially and administratively unprepared for war, and that when ready, after the armistice is over, she will only be strong enough to fight one Power, but not two, Count Andrassy holds that Austria is in a position to break up Turkey, or paralyze Russia for years to come, by declaring for either Power, that is, if she can reckon on the benevolent neutrality of Germany.

His wish, as a Hungarian, is, of course, to oppose Panslavism, the leadership of which the Czar has assumed by his celebrated Moscow speech.

Hungary owes a grudge to Russia for her suppression of the Hungarian war in 1848, and a debt of gratitude to Turkey for her protection of the Hungarian refugees the year following. Both Hungary and Turkey have an equal interest in opposing the Slav element which Russia has summoned to her assistance, and which threatens the independence, and, indeed, the very existence of the Hungarian Government and of the Porte.

The moment is favourable for resistance, as the combined forces of Austria and Turkey are more than a match for Russia; and Count Andrassy appeals to Prince Bismarck for support or benevolent neutrality.

Prince Bismarck, however, if I am correctly informed, has declined to commit himself and Germany to an anti-Russian policy, and has recommended a strict adherence to the maintenance of peace as well as of the Northern Alliance, as the safest policy for Austria.

The Austrian Ambassador returns to Vienna and Pesth to-morrow to "shoot pheasants," as he tells his friends and colleagues.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 93.

Mr. Lumley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 8.)

(No. 3.) *Brussels, January 7, 1877.*

My Lord,

ON the 1st instant, the King and Queen of the Belgians received the usual congratulations of the Diplomatic Corps, the Chambers, and the various official personages who pay their respects to their Majesties on the occasion of the New Year.

Most of the speeches—some of which, as published in the "Indépendance Belge," are

herewith inclosed—addressed to their Majesties on this occasion, referred to the King's project for the exploration and civilization of Central Africa, and to the success of the late Hygienic Exhibition at Brussels.

The speech of the Burgomaster of Brussels, however, contained a phrase with reference to a question of foreign policy which has been much commented on, and in which M. Anspach assumed that the King had no intention of complying with the reported request of the Great Powers for the employment of Belgian troops in Bulgaria.

"The country," said M. Anspach, "which, thanks to its neutrality, is not called upon, in the event of European complications, to dispose of the national armed force beyond its frontiers, will concentrate upon itself its productive activity, and, under the ægis of your Majesty, will continue that era of prosperity and peace which it has enjoyed since the proclamation of its independence."

Although these words undoubtedly express the popular feeling, not only in Brussels, but throughout the country, they were calculated to produce more surprise than pleasure on the occasion on which they were pronounced.

Referring to this circumstance, the "Etoile Belge," in an article herewith inclosed, observes that the expression of the Burgomaster was all the more significative, since it is not to be supposed that he would have employed it had he not been certain that he was correct in his appreciation; adding, that it would be satisfactory to learn that in speaking as he did the Burgomaster expressed the views of the Government, who would, doubtless, no longer think it necessary to observe the reticence shown by M. Malou when the question was broached in the Chamber.

With reference to this suggestion, I may state that in the event of a similar interpellation being addressed to the Government when Parliament meets, they would probably lay before the Chambers the despatch addressed by Count Lynden to Baron Solvyns on this subject.

The feeling of the army with regard to the employment of Belgian troops in Bulgaria in behalf of peace is naturally favourable.

In an article which has appeared in a late military periodical, "La Belgique Militaire," the writer says:—

"For some time past the European press is filled with reports respecting the occupation of Bulgaria by a corps of Belgian troops.

"We are entirely without information on this grave subject, with regard to which our patriotic feelings call for the greatest reserve.

"All that we can say, however, is that the Belgian army is at the disposal of the King for the service of the State, and that if the army is wanted, either for internal or foreign service, its devotion may be counted on under every circumstance.

"Should the Guaranteeing Powers claim our concurrence on behalf of the maintenance of peace, we believe there is nothing in our Constitution to prevent our acceding to their views, and, on the other hand, by rendering ourselves useful, we should acquire fresh guarantees for our neutrality.

"We cannot and will not separate the interests of the army from that of the country, but looking at the expedition from a military point of view, our army could only gain in experience and instruction.

"Such is our opinion on the subject, the entire responsibility of which we assume. As to the army, it has only to wait for the orders of the King, and to execute them with zeal and fidelity."

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. SAVILE LUMLEY.

No. 94.

Mr. Lumley to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 8.)

(No. 4.) *Brussels, January* 7, 1877.

My Lord,

THERE is no truth in the report which has gone the round of the papers, that Prince Orloff has paid a visit to Brussels in consequence of the wish of the King to speak with him on the subject of the proposed occupation of Bulgaria by Belgian troops or volunteers.

Prince Orloff, who has kept up the intimate relations he established with the public men of this country during his long residence as Russian Minister in Belgium, always comes to Brussels at this time of the year, to present his congratulations to their Majesties; on this occasion he dined at the Palace on New Year's Eve, and returned to Paris next morning.

I learn that Prince Orloff expressed some surprise at the opposition which has been shown in Belgium to the proposal for the employment of Belgian volunteers with those of other neutral States, in Bulgaria, and he attributes this opposition to the erroneous impression that has got abroad of it having been suggested that a corps of the Belgian army should be sent to Bulgaria, whereas the proposition he had advocated, though it did not originate with him, was that a police force of volunteers should be recruited in Belgium, Switzerland, and Holland.

The opinion of military men in this country, however, is that those who would volunteer for such a service would be of a most unreliable character, and would require more looking after than the Bulgarians.

I hear that in the course of conversation with the Belgian Minister at St. Petersburgh, Prince Gortchakow stated that the Russian Government did not suggest the idea of a neutral corps of gendarmerie for Bulgaria, though they adhered to it when it was put forward at the Conference at Constantinople.

I am informed that General Thibaut, the Belgian Minister of War, in speaking to Prince Orloff on the possible chances of a conflict between Russia and Turkey told the Russian Ambassador that he believed Turkey would be found to be a much more formidable antagonist than was generally supposed: the information he received from Belgian officers at Constantinople, represented the Turkish Army, though not up to the European mark for smartness, as consisting of excellent, steady, and well-disciplined troops, and which only wanted a sufficient number of good officers to make it a first rate army, their artillery is excellent, and the Turks would begin the campaign with 1,000 pieces of Krupps' cannon, with every requisite complete, which had not yet been used, the guns employed in the Servian Campaign having been of the old pattern.

Large supplies of ammunition and guns ordered of Krupps, and which have been paid for, continue to be shipped from Antwerp to Turkey. One vessel left on the 3rd instant, with eighteen guns and a vast number of shells, and five others have been chartered for the transport of eighty more guns, and a large amount of ammunition. On the other hand, I learn that according to news received at the Belgian war office, the condition of the Russian Army is lamentable, the number of men "hors de combat" from the fatigue of marching over roads rendered almost impracticable by bad weather and by illness of various kinds is very great, which in addition to the ordinary non-combatants has reduced the strength of the six corps d'armées mobilized by Russia to such an extent, that not more than 80,000 men could take the field against the Turks.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. SAVILE LUMLEY.

No. 95.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 8.)

(Telegraphic.) *Berlin, January* 8, 1877.

FOLLOWING sent to Lord Salisbury at 2 this afternoon:—

"The language of German Ambassador does not imply any change of policy on the part of Prince Bismarck; but he wishes to be made acquainted with the proposed demands, measures, or concessions before giving his sanction to them."

No. 96.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, January* 8, 1877, 5·45 P.M.

DO not understand what your telegram of to-day refers to.

It would be better for you not to telegraph direct to Lord Salisbury. Any telegram from you received here can be repeated to him.

No. 97.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 9.)

(No. 3.) *Galatz, January* 3, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 1 of the 1st instant, I have the honour to report that the Turkish gunboat "Varna" yesterday evening passed up the river, bound for Matchin, opposite to Ibraila.

Four other gunboats also passed Galatz, proceeding up the river towards Roustchouk; one remains at Sulina, and another at Vilcovo, at the mouth of the Vrilia branch of the Danube.

There are in all twelve Turkish gun-boats now on the Danube.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PERCY SANDERSON.

No. 98.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 9.)

Berlin, January 9, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

MY telegram of yesterday was in reply to one from Lord Salisbury, which I took it for granted had been repeated to your Lordship from Constantinople.

Lord Salisbury asked me whether the German Ambassador's refusal to consent to less stringent demands than those addressed to Turkey in the first instance indicated a change of policy on the part of Prince Bismarck.

No. 99.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby. (*Received January* 9.)

St. Petersburgh, January 9, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

PRINCE GORTCHAKOW told me yesterday that if all the Powers assent to the renewal of the Eastern Conference in another capital—an Italian idea—Russia would do so likewise, but that he would not initiate proposal.

I am informed that the Russian Ambassador at Berlin has expressed opinion, probably received from Prince Bismarck, that renewal of Conference in a foreign capital would only be desirable if combined action should be resolved on.

In the event of rupture of Conference Russia, I consider, will take no immediate action, but will seek to cover herself by Europe. It is somewhat feared that Turkey may declare war against Russia.

No. 100.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 10, 1877.)

(No. 18.) *Tiflis, December* 28, 1876.

My Lord,

SIXTEEN hundred reserve arrived to-day; also 600 Cossacks; latter go to Erivan. Force concentrating there will probably march on Erzeroum by Bajscuet. Turkey will be attacked, I think, on or before the 5th January. Grand Duke will command army of Caucasus; he is, it is said, very incapable. It seems Russians intend attacking Batoum and Erzeroum at the same time. Leaving some 10,000 men for the defence of the frontier between Ozurget and Soukhum Kalé, there would be 20,000 left for an attack on Batoum, that is, supposing 30,000 are placed as I reported in my despatch No. 12; this attack would be made by two roads, one by the hills and the other by the coast. Again, leaving 15,000 men at Kars and 15,000 on remainder of frontier between Erivan and and Akalzik, there would be 50,000 men left for an attack on Erzeroum, that is, supposing 80,000 men are placed as I reported in my despatch No. 12. In the event of a defeat, there would not be much to fall back on in the shape of a reserve at present. I find that none of the population of this country are well disposed towards Russia. Two thousand infantry and 400 Cossacks are gone to Soukhum Kalé.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. S. RICKETTS.

No. 100*.

Vice-Consul Billiotti to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 10, 1877.)

(No. 30. Political.) *Trebizond, December* 27, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that on the evening of the 24th the Pasha received an official telegram announcing the promulgation at Constantinople, with the approval of the Sheik-ul-Islam, of the Constitution.

Several of the leading Mussulmans of the town happening to be with him at the time, he tried to explain, in communicating the news to them, what a Constitution was; but he told me that he doubted whether they have been able to comprehend accurately his explanations.

On the 25th the above-mentioned telegram was published at the Seraglio in the presence of a large concourse of people, of a body of troops under arms, the military band playing, and a salvo of 101 guns being fired at the same time. An invitation to illuminate in the evening was not taken notice of by the inhabitants.

No strong, but rather an unfavourable, impression has been produced here by this publication. For the populations in general "something" ("bir-shei"), as they say, has taken place at Constantinople, but they are at a loss to understand what it is. The more intelligent Mussulmans realize only that it is equality for all the subjects of the Sultan, whether Mussulmans or not; and the notion does not seem to afford them much relish, although the idea which prevails that the measure has been adopted by the free-will of the Porte, and not under the pressure of foreign Governments, attenuates a great deal their dissatisfaction.

The Armenians seem to be under the impression that Constitution and Republic are nearly the same thing, and believe that after all the existing state of things would have, perhaps, been preferable to the present innovation.

The educated Greeks alone understand thoroughly the meaning of Constitution, and would be perfectly satisfied if they could be convinced that it will be seriously put into practice.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 101.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 10.)

(No. 19.)
My Lord,

Paris, January 9, 1877.

M. ETIENNE C. SCHENDRÉ, who takes the title of Diplomatic Agent of Roumania at Paris, called upon me this afternoon and said that he was desirous of directing my attention to the wording of the new Ottoman Constitution. There were, he said, in that document expressions which had caused the greatest irritation in his country; and this feeling had been unfortunately increased by the language of Safvet Pasha, the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, who had maintained the correctness of terms which implied that the Roumanians were to be styled Ottomans, and their country was a Province.

M. Schendré expressed a hope that by the influence of the Guaranteeing Powers at Constantinople the Porte would be led to remove effectually all misunderstanding as to the position in which Roumania was placed by the ancient Capitulations and by modern Treaties.

He read to me, from a book which he had brought with him, French translations of parts of the Capitulations, and he pointed out to me in particular a Treaty of Commerce concluded by Queen Elizabeth in April, 1588, with a Prince of Moldavia.

He told me that he was going to London for a short visit, in a few days' time, but not with any special diplomatic mission.

He observed that when the time came he should very probably be entrusted with the negotiation of the definitive Treaty of Commerce between Roumania and England as well as of that between Roumania and France.

He stoutly denied that the Jews in the Principalities are either ill-treated or discontented. The complaints made to foreign Governments by the Israelite Alliance and such bodies were, he uncompromisingly maintained, the results of an agitation got up abroad, to which the Jews actually in Roumania were entire strangers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 102.

Mr. Cumberbatch to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 10, 5 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, January 10, 1877, 2·22 P.M.

RUSSIAN General Nikitin, who arrived here three weeks ago, in consequence of a telegram received late last night, left Belgrade early this morning, it is said to St. Petersburgh, but contradictory rumour states to Bessarabia.

No. 103.

*The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Paget.**

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.)

Foreign Office, January 10, 1877.

ITALIAN Ambassador tells me that his Government believe Austria meditates an immediate occupation of part of Bosnia in case Conference breaks up unsuccessfully. In that case Italian Government fear a general agitation in Italy for annexation of the Trentino.

No. 104.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(No. 22.)
My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 10, 1877.

THE German Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and spoke to me of the modifications which, it is understood, that the Plenipotentiaries at Constantinople have agreed to make in the proposals submitted by them to the Porte. He said that the

* Repeated to Constantinople, Vienna, Berlin, St. Petersburgh, and copied to Paris.

German Ambassador at Constantinople had not reported anything on the subject to his Government, and that Prince Bismarck was ignorant of the nature of the proposed concessions. His impression was, however, that it was intended to embody the proposals so modified in some form of ultimatum, which should be binding on the Powers for subsequent negotiations. Count Münster asked whether Her Majesty's Government had agreed or were disposed to agree to such a course.

I told his Excellency that we agreed to the concessions and approved of them, thinking them an improvement on the original proposals. We had not, however, consented, and should not agree to the presentation of them in the form of an ultimatum, nor to their being embodied in a Protocol or other document, which should be binding on the Powers. Her Majesty's Government would object to such a proceeding, inasmuch as they had not given their consent to the scheme, whether in its original or modified shape, as conveying the ultimate decision of the Powers, but as proposals put forward as a basis for further discussion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 105.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Paget.

(No. 13.) *Foreign Office, January* 10, 1877.

Sir,

THE Italian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and asked me some questions as to the prospects of the Conference, which I answered to the best of my ability.

His Excellency then went on to say that his Government were very anxious that some agreement should be come to as to the course to be followed in case of the Conference breaking up without result. The ground for their anxiety was that they had reason to believe that in such an event Austria meditated the immediate occupation of a portion of Bosnia.

I thanked General Menabrea for this communication, but said that as I presumed his Government did not hold to the integrity of the Ottoman Empire simply as an abstract idea, he would perhaps allow me, speaking frankly, to inquire in what manner Italy would be specially affected by an occupation or annexation of part or the whole of Bosnia by Austria.

General Menabrea replied that his Government would be indirectly but very materially affected by such a step. There was a portion of the Trentino, the annexation of which to the Italian Kingdom had always been strongly desired by a certain party in Italy. The possession of this district was of considerable military advantage to Austria, and she had retained it. But the sympathies and disposition of the inhabitants were entirely in favour of union with Italy. As surely as Austria took any steps towards the acquisition of fresh territory at the expense of Turkey, so surely would a cry be raised throughout Italy for compensation in the form of a cession of the district in question. Recent events had proved that a Government might be forced by popular sentiment into a course from which it was itself adverse, and the Italian Government were desirous of avoiding, as far as possible, the chance of their being placed in such a position.

I again thanked his Excellency for the frankness of his communication.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No 106.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(*Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January* 11, 1877.)

Sublime Porte, le 26 Décembre, 1876.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

EN me référant à mon télégramme du 23 Décembre annonçant la proclamation de la Constitution, j'ai l'honneur de vous transmettre, ci-jointe, la traduction de ce document, ainsi que du Hatt Impérial qui l'a sanctionnée.

La solennité de Samedi dernier s'est accomplie avec autant de calme que d'éclat, et au milieu d'un enthousiasme universel. Des salves d'artillerie ont salué cette proclamation et ont annoncé à toute la capitale ce grand événement qui inscrira dans les fastes de l'Empire Ottoman une date ineffaçable. Tout le jour et toute la nuit la

population a témoigné, par des manifestations spontanées, ses sentiments de reconnaissance et de fidélité pour son Souverain et sa confiance dans le succès de son œuvre de régénération. Vous pouvez affirmer hautement qu'à cet égard il y a eu, entre la population Musulmane et la population Chrétienne, communauté absolue de sentiments et d'espérances.

Après la lecture du Hatt Impérial, son Altesse le Grand Vézir, dans une allocution éloquente et chaleureuse, s'est fait l'organe des sentiments de reconnaissance, de joie et de juste orgueil qui animent le peuple Ottoman tout entier, et a présenté, dans le plus noble et le plus patriotique langage, le tableau saisissant des institutions nouvelles qui fondent dans l'Empire Ottoman le règne de la liberté, de la justice et de l'égalité, c'est-à-dire le triomphe de la civilisation.

Les pensées vraiment magnanimes exprimées par le Sultan, notre auguste maître, dans son Hatt à son Altesse le Grand Vézir, se passent de tout commentaire, et je craindrais de les affaiblir en essayant de les développer. Je ne puis cependant m'empêcher de constater qu'elles renferment, sous la forme la plus concise et la plus élevée, la confirmation saisissante de tous les grands principes dont la constitution est l'expression légale, de façon à enlever aux sophistes les plus habiles, aux détracteurs les plus malveillants, la possibilité ou la tentative de dénaturer l'esprit ou la portée des dispositions de cet acte fondamental; car il a plu à Sa Majesté Impériale de se faire elle-même l'interprétateur Souverain de la charte qu'elle a octroyée à ses peuples.

Je ne crois pas nécessaire d'appeler votre attention sur chacun des chapitres qui composent la Constitution. La clarté et la précision qui ont présidé à leur rédaction rendent tout commentaire ou toute explication superflus.

Les réflexions que je crois utile de vous soumettre doivent particulièrement porter, d'une part, sur l'ensemble de ses dispositions, et, d'autre part, sur le caractère des garanties d'exécution que ces dispositions trouvent dans la Constitution elle-même.

Vous remarquerez que la Constitution démontre clairement que les institutions nouvelles, bien loin d'avoir un caractère théocratique, établissent nettement qu'aucune prescription religieuse n'entrave l'application des réformes et l'établissement d'un ordre de choses judiciaire et administratif conforme aux besoins du pays et aux principes du droit moderne. C'est ainsi que tombe cette croyance, malheureusement trop répandue, d'après laquelle le Chéri serait incompatible avec les nouvelles institutions. Il ne faut pas oublier en effet que son Altesse le Cheikh-ul-Islam et tous les grands dignitaires du Chéri ont pris part à l'élaboration et à la discussion de la Constitution, et qu'il est non pas seulement inadmissible, mais absolument impossible que ces gardiens autorisés de la loi sacrée aient laissé insérer une seule clause qui pût y porter atteinte.

Les principes généraux de liberté et d'égalité proclamés en tête de la Constitution et qui sont empruntés au droit public Européen le plus libéral, constituent la base véritable de notre grande réforme et toutes les dispositions qui suivent n'en sont, en quelque sorte, que le développement naturel.

La définition des principales prérogatives de la souveraineté était le complément nécessaire de cette déclaration de principes, et l'heureuse pensée de placer les droits de la dynastie Impériale sous la sauvegarde de tous, forme une disposition qui sans doute servira à convaincre l'Europe du caractère vraiment démocratique de l'Etat social Ottoman. C'est le père qui, tout en conviant ses enfants à participer à l'administration de leurs propres intérêts, se confie à leur amour et à leur fidélité.

Les dispositions de la Constitution qui fondent un Corps Législatif normal et régulier, sous la forme de deux Chambres avec la dénomination d'Assemblées Générales, sont naturellement celles qui attireront plus particulièrement l'attention des Cabinets Européens, et vous devrez vous appliquer à faire ressortir à leurs yeux les garanties de bonne administration financière qui résulteront de la discussion publique et du vote rigoureusement obligatoire de toutes les lois de finances et notamment du budget de recettes et des dépenses. Il n'y a, à cet égard, aucune réserve, et le pays, par l'organe de ses représentants, se trouve désormais investi du plus efficace et du plus absolu des pouvoirs, de celui qui commande tous les autres, c'est-à-dire, du pouvoir de créer les ressources de l'Etat, d'en régler les dispositions, et d'en contrôler l'emploi. A ce sujet, vous ne manquerez pas de faire remarquer avec quel soin la Cour des Comptes a été entourée de garanties d'indépendance et d'impartialité. Non-seulement ses membres sont, comme tous les Magistrats de l'ordre judiciaire, déclarés inamovibles, mais encore aucun d'eux ne pourra être révoqué, même pour les causes les plus graves, qu'avec l'assentiment de la Chambre des Députés.

L'administration des provinces qui, dans les circonstances actuelles, sollicite plus spécialement l'attention de l'Europe, n'est et ne pouvait être définie dans la Constitution

que sous la forme d'un programme général et d'une sorte de déclaration de principes. Des lois organiques vont donner, sans aucun retard, à ce programme sa forme définitive et son développement normal. Ce que proclame la Constitution, c'est un nouveau régime basé sur la plus large décentralisation administrative: c'est le principe de l'élection scrupuleusement appliqué à la formation de tous les Conseils des Vilayets, des Sandjaks et de Cazas; c'est le développement simultané de l'autonomie de différentes communautés, y compris la communauté Musulmane, pour la gestion de leurs intérêts particuliers, indépendants des intérêts généraux du pays: c'est, enfin, la création des Conseils Municipaux élus gérant les affaires de chaque commune de l'Empire.

Après la lecture de ces dispositions libérales, on se demande quelles pourraient être encore les aspirations des populations des provinces qui n'auraient point été satisfaites, et quelles garanties plus sérieuses et plus efficaces les Puissances, qui se sont préoccupées de leur sort, pourraient encore demander au Gouvernement Impérial. Assurément le scepticisme même le plus enraciné se trouvera désarmé; mais il n'est pas impossible qu'à défaut d'autre élément de critiques l'esprit de dénigrement systématique dont nous avons eu tant à nous plaindre en Europe, se porte sur la question d'exécution, et que l'on essaie de mettre en doute la mise en application rapide et rigoureuse des institutions nouvelles. A ceux qui, de bonne foi, paraîtraient tourner leur préoccupation de ce côté, vous pouvez hardiment répondre que le fait suivra de près l'engagement et qu'indépendamment de la volonté si solennellement affirmée de Sa Majesté notre auguste Maître, indépendamment des résolutions énergiques du Grand Vézir dont les efforts constants ont été dirigés vers le but que nous venons d'atteindre, la nation toute entière est animée du même esprit et des mêmes sentiments, et que c'est là la meilleure et la plus solide des garanties. Vous voudrez bien aussi, M. l'Ambassadeur, dans le cas où il serait fait un rapprochement entre les promesses contenues dans les Hatts Impériaux antérieurs et les dispositions de la Constitution nouvelle, relever et établir avec force et netteté la différence radicale qui existe entre ces deux ordres de faits, différence telle qu'elle repousse la pensée même d'une comparaison. La Constitution n'est pas une promesse, c'est un acte réel et formel qui est devenu la propriété de tous les Ottomans et dont le développement ne pourrait être arrêté ou retardé que par la volonté de la nation elle-même, unie à celle du Souverain. Cet acte définitif et solennel n'a pas été demandé par l'Europe, ni conseillée par elle. Le Gouvernement Impérial n'a donc pu avoir l'intention de donner satisfaction à des vœux ou à des idées venus du dehors. Il n'a subi d'autre pression, d'autre influence que celles de la raison et du patriotisme. C'est pourquoi nous demandons aujourd'hui que l'Europe ait confiance dans nos jeunes institutions, et qu'elle y trouve la garantie complète des intérêts qu'elle s'était donné la tâche de sauvegarder. Nous avons le droit de constater avec orgueil que sa solicitude a été à la fois devancée et dépassée par la généreuse et suprême initiative de notre auguste Souverain.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) SAFVET.

No. 107.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(*Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January* 11.)

Constantinople, le 10 *Janvier*, 1877.

(Télégraphique.)

CERTAINES expressions employées dans la Constitution Ottomane ayant été interprétées dans un sens erroné par le Gouvernement des Principautés-Unies, et l'Agence Princière à Constantinople ayant fait des demandes à ce sujet auprès de la Sublime Porte, je viens d'adresser au Général Ghika une note pour déclarer que le Gouvernement Impérial n'a jamais eu l'intention de porter atteinte directement ou indirectement à la situation des Principautés-Unies, telle qu'elle résulte des Traités, et que la situation de ce pays reste ce qu'elle était avant notre Constitution.

No. 108.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(*Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January* 11.)

Constantinople, le 10 *Janvier*, 1877.

(Télégraphique.)

DANS la dernière séance de la Conférence un long Mémoire a été lu au nom des Représentants Etrangers pour répondre à notre refus d'accepter les propositions des Puissances, et pour soutenir le premier programme de l'Europe sous une autre forme. Ensuite, Lord Salisbury a pris la parole et appuyé fortement le même programme. Les Représentants Etrangers ont insisté sur l'institution de la Commission Internationale comme offrant une garantie pour la bonne administration des trois provinces. Nous avons dû repousser cette proposition, et la discussion ainsi suspendue a été renvoyée à la séance prochaine qui aura lieu demain.

L'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre vient de nous communiquer un nouveau projet. Il y a dans ce projet des propositions admissibles; mais les points contenus dans ce nouveau programme concernant la nomination des Valis avec l'assentiment des Puissances Garantes, et la gendarmerie organisée avec le concours d'officiers et de sous-officiers Européens ne sauraient être acceptés par le Gouvernement Impérial.

Nous insisterons sur la nomination des Valis suivant les dispositions de la Constitution.

Nous proposerons la formation d'une gendarmerie de Musulmans et de Chrétiens, ainsi que l'institution de deux Commissions composées en nombre égal de Musulmans et de Chrétiens qui seront chargées de veiller à l'exécution des réformes constitutionnelles dans les provinces, de veiller à la prohibition du port des armes sans une autorisation spéciale du Gouvernement Impérial, et d'exécuter les décisions à prendre à l'égard des mêmes provinces. Vous savez qu'à la rencontre de la Note Andrassy, nous avions institué une pareille Commission pour la Bosnie.

No. 109.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.[2]—(*Received January* 11.)

Pera, January 11, 1877, 11 A.M.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to Lord A. Loftus' telegram, repeated by you yesterday, I do not believe that in the event of the Conference breaking down there is the slightest chance of Turkey declaring war against Russia.

No. 110.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 11, 3 P.M.)

Constantinople, January 11, 1877, 11 A.M.

(Telegraphic.)

AT my audience of the Sultan yesterday, I strongly urged the necessity of an immediate acceptance of proposals submitted by Plenipotentiaries, and represented that the points to which exception had been taken by the Porte had been so much modified by the exertion of the Marquis of Salisbury that any true friend of Turkey would deplore their rejection and the consequences to which it must lead.

The conversation turned almost entirely upon the International Commission.

The Sultan said that if it were only a question of naming an English Commissioner, or even English and French Commissioners, he would not hesitate for a moment, as he knew our Governments to be animated by goodwill towards Turkey, but he could not feel the same as regards some of the other Governments.

He asked me how it was proposed to constitute the Commission, alluding, I imagine, to the part to be taken in it by a Turkish Commissioner.

I was not in a position to give this information, but I left the Sultan with a strong impression that no insuperable objection will be made by him to the appointment of a Commission for a limited period with an Ottoman member upon it.

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[2] Repeated to St. Petersburgh.

No. 111.

Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 11, 2·28 P.M.)

January 11, 1877, 12 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)
CONSUL at Galatz reports, "Russian contractor is here negotiating for the supply of flour, biscuits, &c."

No. 112.

*The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.**

Foreign Office, January 11, 1877, 4·10 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)
ODIAN EFFENDI has mentioned to me to-day a suggestion that the Constitution recently decreed for the Ottoman Empire, together with new provincial Administration to be drawn up, should be made a matter of international agreement between Turkey and the Powers, who would then have a right to watch over its execution. This plan, he said, Midhat Pasha would be ready to bring forward as a counter project to the scheme of reforms and guarantees proposed in Conference, which (especially the guarantees) the Porte felt they could not accept.

I declined to express an opinion on this proposal, stating that it would be inconvenient to discuss here matters which were in negotiation at Constantinople, and I again urged the expediency of the Porte submitting to conditions which they might consider disadvantageous rather than risk a war single-handed with Russia.

No. 113.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 11.)

Vienna, January 11, 1877, 4·45 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)
I DO not know how Italian Government can have received the information referred to in your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, as the Italian Minister here says that Austria will not occupy Bosnia immediately, even if a Russian force enters Bulgaria.

Count Andrassy stated some time ago he would meet any movement in Italy to annex territory by rectifying the Austrian frontier at her expense.

I hope to see his Excellency to-morrow at Pesth.

No. 114.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.†

Foreign Office, January 11, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)
(Most Confidential.)
COUNT SCHOUVALOFF positively assures me that there is an intimate understanding between Austria, Germany, and Russia. He speaks of it as a fact for which he can vouch. I hear, however, on good authority, that Count Andrassy has lately held language quite inconsistent with any such relations, and has boasted of "privately propping up" the Turks. I give these two statements as they reach me, but incline to think the latter the more credible of the two.

No. 115.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

Foreign Office, January 11, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)
LORD SALISBURY telegraphs—"German Ambassador informs me he has received renewed orders to decline formally that he will not suffer any abatement of the proposals."

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* Repeated to Berlin, Vienna, St. Petersburgh, Rome, and copy to Paris.
† Sent also to Sir A. Buchanan.

No. 114*.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(No. 25 A. Most Confidential.)
My Lord,
Foreign Office, January 11, 1877.

I HAVE been positively assured by Count Schouvaloff of the existence of an intimate understanding on the Eastern question between Austria, Germany, and Russia. His Excellency speaks of this as a fact for which he can vouch. On the other hand I learn, on good authority, that Count Andrassy has recently held language altogether inconsistent with such relations, and has boasted that he is "privately propping up the Turks." I think it desirable to communicate to your Excellency these two statements as they have reached me, but I am myself inclined to think the latter the most credible.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 116.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 11, *night.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January* 11, 1877.

THREE Turkish ironclads left Bosphorus on the evening of the 9th instant for Batoum, having on board a quantity of torpedoes for defence of that harbour.

No. 117.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 12, 1877.)

(No. 1400.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 29, 1876.

EDHEM PASHA, the second Turkish Plenipotentiary at the Conference, has been appointed President of the Council of State.

The vacancy had not been filled since the nomination of Midhat Pasha to the Grand Vizierate; the information contained in my telegram of the 19th instant having been incorrect upon this point.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 118.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 12, 1877.)

(No. 1401.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 30, 1876.

MR. VICE-CONSUL DUPUIS reports, under date of the 22nd instant, that the disarmament of the inhabitants of the Province of Adrianople by the authorities is being peaceably and quietly carried out, and that quantities of arms during the last few days have been collected and brought in from the surrounding villages, and deposited at the konak.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 119.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 12, 1877.)

(No. 1402. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 31, 1876.

The inclosed statement of the present strength of the Turkish army has been given to me confidentially by a German long in the service of the Porte, and holding a high position on the staff.

I told him that according to the most trustworthy accounts the real force was very inferior to the official returns, but he assured me in the most positive manner that the figures he has given may be relied upon. They put the present force north of the Balkans, to the east of Nicopolis, at only 45,000 men, but, he says, these are being rapidly increased.

I understand that the fortified places are very insufficiently provisioned, and that the amount of grain in the country is so small that it will not be easy to supply the deficiency.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 119.

Statement of the Present Strength of the Turkish Army.

Corps.	Infanterie.	Bataillons.	Cavalerie: Régiments à 5 Escadrons.	Artillerie.	Batteries à 6 pièces.	Génie Bataillons.
I	Ligne (*a*)	26	6	2 régiments à 4-4 batteries ..	28	2
	Réserve (Redif)—			1 régiment du réserve nouvellement formé de	8	
	1er ban	10				
	2nd ban	10				
	3ème ban (*b*)	21				
II	Ligne	24	4	1 régiment	11	
	Réserve—					
	1er ban	24				
	2nd ban	24				
	3ème ban	24			14	
III	Ligne	24	4	1 régiment		
	Réserve—					
	1er ban	32				
	2nd ban	32				
	3ème ban	24	1	1 régiment	11	
IV	Ligne	24				
	Réserve—					
	1er ban	24				
	2nd ban	24				
	3ème ban	24	4	1 régiment	11	
V	Ligne	24				
	Réserve—					
	1er ban	24				
	2nd ban	24				
	3ème ban	24			11	
VI	Ligne	20	2	1 régiment	6	
VII	Ligne	20	..	.. .. ..	2	
	Contingent Egyptien ..	9	..	.. .. ..		
				Extra formation de batteries de montagne	10	
	Total	398	21	Total	124	2

En outre il y a dans chaque place forte plusieurs compagnies d'artilleurs de forteresse, destinés au service des canons du siége et de défense.

NOTES.

(*a*) D'après le plan d'organisation de l'armée Turque chaque corps devait être composé de 24 bataillons d'infanterie—dont 6 chasseurs—avec autant de districts pour le recrutement de l'armée et pour les troupes de la réserve (Rédif), ainsi que de 4 régiments de cavalerie et d'un régiment d'artillerie. Le premier corps, la Garde, est cependant composé de 28 bataillons d'infanterie de la ligne, de 6 régiments de cavalerie et de 2 régiments d'artillerie. Il y a aussi 16 bataillons de réserve de plus, formés par les habitants du littoral de la côte sud de la Mer Noire et des Dardanelles qui fournissaient seulement de recrues pour la marine.

Le 3ème corps dépasse de même le chiffre réglementaire: il lui est attaché la brigade Bosniaque de 3 bataillons avec autant de districts de recrutement, le régiment de cordon Bosniaque de 4 bataillons, le régiment de cordon sur la frontière Circasque de 3 bataillons et les bataillons de cordon de Seturi, d'Albanie, et de Nielsich. Par contre le 11ème corps (de Bagdad) n'est encore composé que de 20 bataillons d'infanterie, et n'a que 2 régiments de cavalerie, et le 7ème, celui du Yemen, n'a pas de cavalerie du tout et même ses 20 bataillons d'infanterie ne se recrutent pas dans le reste de l'Empire.

(*b*) Les troupes de la réserve du 3ème ban ne sont pas prévues dans le plan d'organisation Chaque sujet Turc Mahométan—avec l'exception des habitants de Constantinople—est généralement redevable de 20 années de service militaire, dès sa 20ème jusqu'à la 40ème année, dont 6 dans la ligne, y compris un congé de 1 à 3 ans, qui lui passer dans la catégorie des troupes ikhtiyats, appelés en cas de guerre pour remplir les cadres de leurs mêmes bataillons de la ligne, 3 ans dans la réserve du 1er et 3 autres dans celle du 2nd ban et 8 dans le "Mustahfiz" troupe destinée pour la défense nationale. Le besoin s'étant fait sentir depuis quelques mois de créer de nouvelles formations, il a été décidé de se servir à cet effet de l'excédent d'individus relevables au service dans la réserve, non encore appelés sous les armes, et la formation de 24 bataillons dans chacun des corps No. 1 à 5 a été décrétée et exécutée. Cela prouve que la Turquie n'est pas si pauvre quant au matériel d'hommes que l'on aime généralement à croire, mais en même temps ainsi que la plupart des troupes de la réserve ne peut pas avoir la même valeur que celles de la ligne, par ce qu'une partie seulement a servi dans celle-ci, dont les bataillons en temps ordinaire ne sont guère plus forts que de 500 hommes, tandis que chaque district de bataillon peut fournir 3 bataillons de réserve forts ensemble de 2,400 hommes et plus. Cette infériorité s'accentue encore plus parce que seulement pour la réserve du 1er ban des cadres assez complets

existaient dans tous les corps et dans quelques uns des cadres très faibles pour le 2nd ban. Les aptitudes naturelles pour le métier militaire que possède chaque Turc tendent cependant à faire disparaître cette infériorité après un laps de temps relativement court passé sous les armes et en exercice.

Il est difficile d'évaluer le nombre d'hommes dont les formations indiquées dans le tableau sont composées, parceque quant aux bataillons d'infanterie qui se sont trouvés en campagne depuis longtemps, surtout ceux qui ont opéré en Herzégovine et au sud du Monténégro, leur effectif a été réduit en partie à un chiffre très faible, tandis que celui des bataillons de la réserve du 3ème ban dépasse partout le chiffre réglementaire de 800 hommes, plusieurs bataillons ayant même jusqu'à 1,200 sous les armes.

En évaluant approximativement l'effectif de chaque bataillon d'infanterie en moyenne à 750 hommes on arrive aux chiffres suivants—

	Hommes.
598 bataillons d'infanterie	448,500
21 régiments de cavalerie	14,490
124 batteries	14,880
2 bataillons du génie	1,600
L'artillerie des places fortes	12,000
Total	491,000

En outre il a été décrété de préparer tout pour qu'au premier appel chaque district dans les rayons des corps No. 1-5 puisse mettre sous les armes 1,000 hommes de la catégorie "Mustahfiz," par quelle mesure, où y compris la brigade Bosniaque, un contingent de 160,000 hommes serait fourni. Soit même qu'il n'existe ni cadres, ni organisation pour eux, ils pourront avec avantage être employés et pour la défense des places fortes, ce qui permet de rendre plus fortes les armées d'opération, et pour augmenter l'effectif des troupes par lesquelles ces dernières sont formées.

Des milliers de volontaires qui, s'étant fait enrôler à Constantinople, avaient pris part à la guerre contre la Serbie et sont rentrés à la cessation des hostilités, se sont présentés au Ministère de la Guerre en sollicitant de les incorporer de nouveau dans la troupe régulière si une guerre nouvelle éclate.

Il paraît que le Gouvernement a pris en principe la sage résolution de ne plus employer des troupes irrégulières. Il ne pourra cependant pas se passer d'eux quant à la cavalerie, la cavalerie régulière étant insuffisante. Sous ce rapport les Circassiens fourniront le meilleur matériel dont on pourrait former des régiments organisés et disciplinés avec des commandants responsables. Un commencement en ce sens a été fait en Asie dans le rayon du 4ème Corps d'Armée (Erzeroum), un chef Circassien, ancien officier Russe, organisant là une division de cavalerie de 4,000 hommes.

La dislocation des 598 bataillons est inconnue et impossible à contrôler, à peu-près elle est indiquée par ce qui suit:—

	Bataillons.
Dans la Province de Bagdad	20
" " Yemen	20
En Syrie	24
Dans le rayon du 4ème corps d'armée Erzeroum	100
Sur l'Ile de Crète	15
Dans la Province de Tripoli de Barbarie	4
" " de l'Epire et de Thessalie	40
Corps de Seturi d'Albanie	30
En Herzégovine	32
En Bosnie	27
Groupe de Sjenitza, Novibazar	30
Corps de Nich, Alexinatz	50
Corps de Widdin, Saitchar	40
Total	452

Les 146 bataillons restant sont, à part quelque uns du 3ème ban de la réserve d'Asie, qui n'ont pas encore été expédiés en Europe, en grande partie éparpillés au nord des Balkans, et le reste au sud jusqu'à Constantinople. Dans l'espace compris entre Tutkja, Nikopoli, Shoumla, et Varna se trouvent à peu près 60 bataillons.

Soit même que certainement la dislocation actuelle des troupes n'a pas été établie dans l'intention de les exposer ainsi à une invasion Russe, et que la déclaration de la guerre amènerait des changements et des concentrations, il est permis de supposer que la direction militaire a conçu le plan de vouloir défendre le passage du Danube par un système de cordon, en faisant occuper trop de points le long du fleuve par des troupes. Cette manière a été condamnée depuis longtemps par la science militaire et son application pourrait dans le cas donné devenir d'autant plus dangereuse que le Général-en-chef Russe, en profitant du Chemin de Fer Roumain, qui lui permet de faire transporter des troupes jusqu'aux confins Serbes, peut faire exécuter facilement des diversions en différents endroits et forcer le passage du fleuve sur un point voulu avec une armée tellement forte qu'il puisse réussir d'empêcher le concentration des troupes Turques en les battant en détail et de s'établir ainsi en Bulgarie.

L'armée d'Asie, forte de 100 bataillons d'infanterie avec 10 régiments de cavalerie, dont 6 Circassiens, et 17 batteries, s'appuyent sur les places fortes de Kars, d'Ardahan, et d'Erzeroum. Ces places, bien que les travaux de fortification projetés ne soient pas tous entièrement achevés, sont suffisamment fortes et—comme toutes les places dans la Turquie d'Europe aussi—pourvus de canons rayés de gros calibre pour opposer une résistance sérieuse à une armée Russe.

Une division de 12 bataillons défendra sur l'aile droite les défilés qui traversent les routes conduisant à Erzeroum. Sur l'extrême aile gauche est concentré à Batoum un corps de 20 bataillons. L'accès de Batoum du côté de la mer est défendu par plusieurs batteries qui empêcheraient une flotille Russe de s'approcher, si jamais les Russes étaient assez hardis de vouloir dans les circonstances actuelles se servir pour faire un coup de main des nombreux bateaux à vapeur de leur compagnie privilégiée qui, dans le temps avant l'époque des navires cuirassés, furent construits avec l'intention de les armer dans un moment donné.

Les troupes de la catégorie "Mustahfiz" étant spécialement propres à la défense des places fortes, on n'aura qu'un très petit nombre de bataillons organisés à désigner dans les forteresses, de manière que la principale armée d'opération sera toujours forte de plus de 50 bataillons.

Le Mushir, Samih Pacha, commandant le 2ème Corps d'Armée, a été nommé Commandant-en-chef des forces en Asie, et le Ferik Feizi Pacha (Cohuan) son Chef d'Etat-Major.

No. 129.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 12, 1877.)

(No. 1404.) *Constantinople, December* 30, 1876.

My Lord,

AFTER the preliminary meeting of the Plenipotentiaries of the Powers, at which it was agreed to submit to the Conference certain modifications of the frontier line of Montenegro, I requested Colonel Lennox, who had just arrived from visiting the Montenegrin frontier, as a member of the Armistice Commission, to furnish me with a tracing of the proposed new line, and with his opinion upon its merits.

The Memorandum, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy, shows that, in Colonel Lennox opinion, although the territory that it is proposed that Turkey should cede to Montenegro, amounts to nearly three-quarters of the present extent of the Principality, yet the cession of it would prove of decided advantage to Turkey, from a political, strategical, and commercial point of view. The Porte may, however, be inclined to resist it as contrary to the principle of the *statu quo ante* which was accepted as the basis of pacification.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

P.S. *January* 4, 1877.—I learn that the map, with which Colonel Lennox provided me, has been forwarded to your Lordship by the Marquis of Salisbury. H. E.

Inclosure 1 in No. 129.

Memorandum on the future Frontier of Montenegro.

1. *Interests of Great Britain.*—Until recently the influence of England in Montenegro has been very small, owing chiefly to our Government having been the only one which has not had diplomatic relations with Montenegro: this has caused soreness.

At present our commerce with Montenegro must pass through Turkey or Austria. The extension of Montenegro could not do us any harm whatever, and if that extension was up to the sea at any point it would be an absolute advantage to our Government and to our merchants: to our Government, for if we had any "difficulty" with the Montenegrins we should be able to bring the power of our Navy to bear on them, whereas at present we could not possibly chastise them in any way without the permission of Turkey or Austria: to our merchants, for they could enter directly into relations with the Montenegrins who now get most things from Austria through Cattaro; the trade in arms and ammunition must be large with a people numbering 185,000, every male of whom almost carries a gun, two pistols, and a couple of swords or long knives.

Permitting the Montenegrins to use Lake Scutari and the River Bojana would not be of any advantage to England.

2.—*Interests of Turkey.*—Any extension of Montenegrin territory must be at the expense of Turkey, so Austria would not, it is presumed, give any even in exchange.

It is said that there are about 90 Turkish blockhouses, or other fortified places around Montenegro: these have been, and always will be, a source of weakness, not of strength, to the Turks, who lose prestige each time the Montenegrins capture one; the garrisons of these blockhouses fritter away the armed force of Turkey, and the Turkish Commanders feel bound in honour to reinforce the places, which is often inconvenient to say the least. The Turks do not stud with forts their frontiers which abut on other countries, nor do other Powers.

The Turkish forts, moreover, have not prevented the Montenegrins descending into the Turkish territory, and have, therefore, failed in their object.

The Turks have found that it is a difficult matter to punish the Montenegrins in their mountainous country; if the Montenegrins had a piece of the plain and a fort, they would be less likely to quarrel with the Turks, and the latter could then easily punish them if they did.

The cession of the port of Spica and of the plain of Spuz would be a cheap way of preventing future wars with Montenegro, who will continually make war at inconvenient times for Turkey, until her territory has been enlarged.

The cession of other portions of land to Montenegro would not really do any harm to Turkey, as the inhabitants of the parts proposed have not, it is said, been in the habit of paying taxes, but, on the contrary, have been paid by Turkey, as frontier troops without any gain of strength, as these troops have, it is believed, gone over to Montenegro when war breaks out.

The opening of the Bojana to Montenegrin trade would be an advantage to Turkey, as the increased tolls that, it is presumed, will be levied, will assist in defraying the river conservation expenses.

3. *Interests of Austria.*—Austria does not want Montenegro to have a port, as she would lose a great part of the trade now going through Cattaro, and her influence in Montenegro would also decrease. Austria does not wish Montenegro to become a "Power," as it might then claim Cattaro, which, by nature, ought to belong to it: she, therefore, dreads seeing Cattaro surrounded more and more by Montenegro. The acquisition of Spica would cause Montenegro to overlap about 2½ more kilometres (1½ miles) of Austrian boundary. The Conference has proposed that the eastern portion of Zubtzi should go to Montenegro: this cession would cause Montenegro to overlap about 11¼ more kilometres (7 miles) of Austrian boundary. Austria, it is presumed, has unwillingly consented to this Zubtzi cession, and Montenegro does not ask for it, at least, the Prince distinctly told me that he would be satisfied if his frontier commenced at the Susica.

It would be an advantage to England and to Montenegro if the latter were given the Spica portion instead of the Zubtzi bit, and Austria would not be overlapped as much (to the extent of 5½ miles)

4. *The General Question.*—Montenegro has not now sufficient territory, and requires especially cultivable land.

The amount of additional territory the Conference proposes to give her, is not, roughly speaking, far short of three quarters of the extent of her present principality.

The Zubtzi, as previously mentioned, might advantageously be excluded.

The Eastern frontier has been traced with a very liberal hand, and gives more than is hoped for by the Montenegrins, but, on the other hand, a natural boundary has been traced.

Provision should be made that the people of the territory transferred should be allowed to retain their own land, or to remove into Turkey.

Montenegro should be required to demolish all the forts on the newly-acquired territory, and not to erect any hereafter.

Special arrangements should be made about the Montenegrin port, if one be granted; men-of-war not to be allowed to enter.

Some small points have not been mentioned in the Conte-rendu No. IV, such as to whom are the following places to belong, viz., Koritz, Piruidol, Propa ti Groga on map), and Fandina? Is the Plava Lake to be divided? The Moratcha has several months, it is believed; is the eastern or the main channel to be the boundary.

(Signed) W. LENNOX, *Colonel R.E.*

December 30, 1876.

Inclosure 2 in No. 129.

Consul Blunt to Sir H. Elliot.

Constantinople, December 18, 1876.

Sir,

I BEG leave to return herewith enclosed Mr. Thomson's letter to your Excellency regarding the Bulgarians of Koichana imprisoned at Uesup, and to report that these people have been set free. Although the district of Uesup is not in the jurisdiction of the Vilayet of Saloniea, but in that of Monastir, Eshref Pasha kindly promised me the day I took my departure from Saloniea that he would represent the case in my name to his colleague at Monastir, and let me know the result through Mr. Vice-Consul Suter. This gentleman writes to me as follows on this subject under date the 11th instant:—

"The Pasha has received no answer whatever to the enquiries for explanation regarding the people of Koichana imprisoned at Uesup. I hear indirectly from reliable

sources that all those who were still in confinement have been liberated and have returned to their homes, not however without, as mentioned by Dr. Thompson having been the case with those previously set free, paying smartly for do so. This information being given to the Pasha he has ordered some of the late prisoners to be brought hither to question them.

"He promises the result, if obtained, shall be made known to you, and meantime I think it best to return to you Dr. Thomson's letter."

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

No. 121.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12, 1877.)

(No. 1405.) *Constantinople, December 30, 1876.*

My Lord,

ALTHOUGH it is usual for an Ambassador to call upon the Grand Vizier immediately on his nomination it was not till two days ago that I was well enough to pay the customary visit to Midhat Pasha.

We have long been intimate, and knowing the support I had always given to his efforts to introduce the radical reforms required in the administration of the country he spoke with the greatest freedom of the present position of affairs.

There was, he said, in the proposals of the Plenipotentiaries much that was practical and important to which he was ready to give a willing assent.

They were based upon the principle of decentralization for which he had long contended, and which was now formally adopted, but they carried it further than even he could admit.

The project as it now stood would be a step towards the certain realization of the Russian dream of creating small autonomic States in European Turkey.

We had only to look back to what had occurred fifty years ago in Servia to become convinced that the compulsory confinement of the Ottoman troops to the fortresses and principal towns would shortly lead to the expulsion of the Turks from the Province, and the establishment of its quasi independence.

It was proposed, moreover, that the Governors-General should be practically selected by the foreign Powers, and a position assured to them, rendering them almost independent of their own Government.

The assignment of a third or of any fixed proportion of the revenues of the Province to Imperial purposes was a principle differing little from a tribute in disguise to which it was impossible for the Porte to consent, and the proposal bore on the face of it evidence of having been drawn up by persons who could not by possibility be in possession of the information required for dealing properly with the fiscal requirements of a country respecting which their information was necessarily superficial.

The proposed guarantees for the execution of the reforms were of a nature which no Turkish Minister could agree to; for though he admitted that war might be nearly the ruin of the Empire, the country was unanimous in preferring the chance of honourable ruin to the acceptance of conditions which were considered dishonourable and, at the same time, fatal.

To a Commission of Control, composed of foreigners, with administrative and legislative powers as was proposed he never would consent, nor would he acquiesce in the presence of any corps of foreign troops.

The Turkish Minister at Brussels had indeed reported that the Belgian Government would not send such a corps except upon the direct invitation of the Porte, which invitation would never be given at the dictation of foreign Powers.

The Porte was, however, quite ready of its own initiative to engage foreign officers, non-commissioned officers, and men to organize an efficient gendarmerie or police force, but these must be in the service of the Ottoman Government.

On the other hand, while he was compelled to reject the guarantee proposed by the Powers he was willing to offer them others which he thought should be held sufficient.

Let a fixed time, say a year, be granted to the Porte for carrying out the reforms now being inaugurated, and at the end of that period let the Ambassadors report whether they were being fairly executed or not.

If they report in the negative the Porte will submit to the appointment of an International Commission, or such other form of control as may be held desirable.

Midhat Pasha concluded by saying that he perfectly understands that he has no

assistance to expect from Great Britain, but he expressed the hope that if Russia now proceeds to endeavour to carry out her long cherished designs against the Turkish Empire she will meet with no support from Her Majesty's Government.

I need not repeat to your Lordship the arguments I used in trying to overcome His Highness's objections.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 122.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12, 1877.)

(No. 1406.) *Constantinople, December 31, 1876.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose the copy of a Memorandum on the proposal for the neutrality of Roumania which has been communicated to me by M. Bratiano, the Agent specially sent by the Roumanian Government to Constantinople during the Conference.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 122.

Memorandum on the Neutrality of Roumania.

PAR le Traité de Paris et les Conventions qui l'ont suivi, les Grandes Puissances ont donné une nouvelle sanction aux droits souverains des Roumains, en reconnaissant d'une manière solennelle les Capitulations conclues par leurs Princes avec les Sultans Ottomans; en même temps, elles ont pris sous leurs auspices la reconstitution et la consolidation de l'Etat Roumain, et elles ont voulu faire de la Roumanie un gage de paix pour l'Orient.

Les Roumains, mûs par un profond sentiment de gratitude pour cette haute sollicitude dont ils ont été l'objet, et jaloux de se montrer dignes de la confiance que les Puissances Garantes et la Sublime Porte ont placé en eux, se sont mis immédiatement à l'œuvre avec une volonté qu'aucun obstacle n'a pu décourager, avec la conscience éclairée de leurs droits et de leurs devoirs envers eux-mêmes et envers l'Europe civilisée; aussi, en moins de vingt ans, ils ont fait dans toutes les branches de l'activité humaine des progrès réels, sensibles, des progrès qui sont d'ordinaire l'œuvre des siècles.

Ils ont abordé déjà la plupart des grandes questions politiques, économiques, et sociales qui préoccupaient le plus leur pays, et ils ont eu le bonheur de les résoudre successivement avec un plein succès, sans secousses, pacifiquement, car dans toutes leurs réformes ils ont pris pour base leurs vieilles institutions nationales qu'ils n'ont fait que enjoindre et développer.

En quelques années ils ont doté leur pays d'une justice et d'une administration, lesquelles, par leur organisation, par leur contingent chaque année plus grand d'hommes instruits et meilleurs que reçoit leur personnel, et par les résultats pratiques qu'elles ont déjà donnés, font bien augurer de l'avenir du pays; aujourd'hui même la sécurité publique est si bien garantie en Roumanie qu'elles n'a rien à envier sous ce rapport aux pays les mieux administrés. Ils ont réussi à asseoir sur des bases rationnelles et équitables la répartition et la perception des impôts. Ils se sont appliqués à donner une grande extension dans leurs villes et dans leurs campagnes à l'instruction primaire, qui est obligatoire et gratuite; quant à l'instruction secondaire et supérieure, également gratuite; indépendamment des gymnases et lycées que possèdent beaucoup de villes et des universités qu'ils ont fondées à Bucarest et à Jassy, 500 à 600 jeunes gens Roumains suivent constamment les cours des facultés et des écoles spéciales de l'Europe éclairée.

Leurs forces matérielles aussi n'ont pas été négligées. Ils peuvent mettre sur pied de guerre en quelques jours 60,000 hommes de troupes régulières, bien exercés, avec 210 canons, dont 150 canons Krupp, et un nombre égal d'hommes de troupes territoriales ou gendarmerie à cheval et à pied.

Ils ont établi dans tout le pays un service régulier de postes et télégraphes. Ils ont construit 1,600 kilom. de chemins de fer et 6,500 kilom. de chaussées, en ne parlant que de grandes voies de communication ou de grandes routes.

Dans ce moment ils s'occupent surtout à donner un plus grand développement à leur commerce et à leur industrie naissante. Mais ce qui fait le couronnement de cette œuvre de régénération, c'est l'émancipation des paysans. La Roumanie, en émancipant son paysan, en le rendant propriétaire du terrain qu'il cultive, en l'instruisant et en lui mettant en même temps une arme entre les mains, lui a donné un sol à aimer et à défendre, et les moyens, l'intelligence, et la force de le bien défendre.

Un trait caractéristique du peuple Roumain, qui donne la mesure de ses vertus civiques, et doit le recommander à l'estime de la diplomatie, c'est qu'il a su concilier l'ordre le plus parfait avec les libertés presque illimitées que lui garantit une des Constitutions les plus libérales des Etats Constitutionnels.

C'est ce bien précieux de l'ordre dans la liberté qui a rendu la Roumanie maîtresse d'elle-même et lui a donné la force de résister à la tourmente qui emportait ses voisins, et d'avoir constamment, au milieu des menaces et des tentations de toute espèce, l'attitude la plus correcte que l'Europe a été unanime à louer.

Sûre d'elle-même, la Roumanie ne peut pas répondre de ce qui peut se passer dans les pays qui l'avoisinent; elle est en conséquence fort inquiète, car les Conventions et les Traités existants ne lui garantissent que ses droits vis-à-vis de la Sublime Porte, et la garantie collective accordée à elle et à la Turquie ne lui servirait à rien lorsque cette dernière se trouverait en guerre avec une autre Puissance. Les Grandes Puissances se refuseraient-elles à légitimer leur titre de Puissances Garantes, qui les honore, à compléter, à rendre réelle la garantie promise à la Roumanie? Dira-t-on que leurs armées sont trop loin de la Roumanie pour qu'elles puissent lui venir efficacement en aide au besoin? Mais si les Puissances prenaient solidairement l'engagement de garantir la Roumanie, alors elles auraient des armées en tout lieu, et d'ailleurs rien que la force morale d'un pareil engagement arrêterait ceux qui seraient tentés de violer le territoire Roumain, et encouragerait ceux qui auraient à le défendre. Il n'y a pas d'exemple qu'une Puissance se soit jamais permis d'essayer de rompre seule, par la force des armes, les engagements pris collectivement par plusieurs Puissances.

Les membres de la Conférence réuni à Constantinople pour assurer la paix en Orient, se croiraient-ils incompétents pour aborder le seul point propre à assurer cette paix pour le présent et pour l'avenir, pour tirer parti de la position géographique de la Roumanie, et déclarer son territoire neutre dans l'intérêt de tous, à l'instar de ce qui a été fait pour la Suisse en 1815 et pour la Belgique en 1870? Non, cela n'est pas raisonnablement admissible; aussi la Roumanie a-t-elle pris la liberté d'adresser à ce sujet à la Conférence par l'organe de son Envoyé Extraordinaire, la prière qui suit, destinée à être remise à son Excellence Safvet Pacha, le Président de la Conférence:—

"1. En conséquence des démarches faites par le Gouvernement Roumain auprès des Puissances Garantes, j'ai l'honneur de demander en son nom à la Conférence de vouloir bien consacrer l'état politique de la Roumanie en garantissant d'une manière spéciale la neutralité perpétuelle du territoire Roumain.

"2. Pour le cas où il y aurait une guerre entre l'une des Puissances Garantes et la Sublime Porte, j'ai l'honneur de demander également à la Conférence, au nom de mon Gouvernement, que les autres Puissances Garantes veuillent bien indiquer à la Roumanie la ligne de conduite qu'elle devra tenir, et lui accorder une garantie spéciale afin que ses droits, sa neutralité, et l'intégrité de son territoire soient respectés."

Vient après l'expression de l'espoir que la Conférence accueillera avec bienveillance la demande du Gouvernement Roumain, destinée à empêcher que la Roumanie ne devienne pas le théâtre de la guerre, et à mieux assurer la paix.

No. 123.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 12.)

(No. 1.) *Constantinople, January* 1, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose the copy of a despatch from Mr. Vice-Consul Dupuis, reporting the progress which is being made in the rebuilding of the burnt villages in Bulgaria.

Much has been certainly done, but Mr. Dupuis' informant has evidently greatly overstated it, as the suffering in many districts is undoubted, and the effects of the late devastation are very far indeed from being as nearly effaced as he intimates.

I take this opportunity of inclosing the extract from a letter from Mr. James Long,

who came out here for the purpose of building houses with funds entrusted to him in England.

The testimony he bears to the facilities given by the Turkish authorities agrees with those which we receive from the agents of our own Relief Committee, and it is curious to see that these gentlemen, sent expressly to succour the Bulgarians, and with their sympathies strongly enlisted in their favour, continually contrast their apathy and unwillingness to assist their own countrymen with the active charity and energy of the populations of the Mussulman villages which had suffered in the same manner.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 123.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Adrianople, December* 29, 1876.

AT the risk of conveying information already known to your Excellency, I beg I may be permitted to quote from a private letter received from my correspondent in the interior of this province dated the 24th instant, that two-thirds of the villages destroyed during the recent disturbances, have been rebuilt by the Turkish Commissioners, and some on this side of the Balkans by the aid of the English Relief Fund.

That two-thirds of the dwellings in Sindjirlzi, Krashtovo, Aivadjik, Novo Selo, Cheren, and Klissura, and a few others have also been rebuilt. At Batak upwards of 250, and at Peroushtiza about 200 houses have likewise been rebuilt.

In the neighbourhood of Tatar-Bazardjik also my informant tells me, that under the supervision of Mr. Long, many habitations are in course of reconstruction, and that before long all traces of the late devastations will have disappeared.

My informant adds that all the inhabitants who abandoned their villages during the troubles have since returned to find their dwellings rebuilt.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. H. DUPUIS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 123.

Mr. Long to Sir H. Elliot.

(Extract.) *Tatar-Bazardjik, December* 21, 1876.

J'AI l'honneur de vous informer que je suis actuellement à Tatar-Bazardjik entre Philippopoli et les Balkans. C'est ici que j'ai établi mon centre actuel d'opérations, me proposant de porter secours aux villages environnants.

Vous connaissiez mon intention de venir en aide aux malheureux livrés aux rigueurs de l'hiver par le manque des maisons, en leur construisant des abris en bois. J'ai déjà terminé mes travaux dans trois villages, et j'espère avoir, avant la fin de l'année, 200 maisons et sept écoles bien achevées.

Je me suis approvisionné du bois nécessaire à mes travaux, à la forêt de Belowa, qui se trouve à la tête de ligne du chemin de fer établi de Constantinople dans ces contrées. Grâce à l'obligeance de la Compagnie de ce chemin de fer, qui a bien voulu me donner le transport gratuit de mon personnel et matériel, je puis avoir mes bois avec la plus grande rapidité. J'ai installé à cette forêt de Belowa une scierie à vapeur que j'ai fait venir de France, et qui me rend de grands services en façonnant les pièces de bois indispensables à mes constructions. M. le Baron de Hirsch, concessionnaire de la forêt de Belowa, m'a prêté également son puissant concours.

Les autorités Turques se sont aussi montrées bien disposées en ma faveur, et je n'ai qu'à me louer de l'appui qu'elles ont bien voulu me prêter en toutes circonstances. Je serais content si je pouvais en dire autant du peuple que je suis venu secourir, et que je trouve ou exalté par des idées peu convenables à leur sort, idées inspirées soit par des démagogues, soit par des journalistes, soit par des missionnaires, qui ont récemment parcouru le pays, et travaillé l'imagination de ces malheureux, chacun pour atteindre son propre but; ou, bien crétinisés par le système de religion de Gouvernement, et de mœurs qui a longtemps régné parmi eux. Ce ne sont certes pas des administrés faciles à mener!

No. 124.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January 12.*)

(No. 2.) *Constantinople, January* 1, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of a telegram and of a despatch from Mr. Baring reporting the anxiety of the Philippopolis Commission to retreat from their decision condemning Achmet Agha to death.

Owing to the interruption of the telegraph lines, the former did not reach me till yesterday, when I sent to Midhat Pasha a letter, of which I inclose the copy, as well as that of the reply, which I received to-day.

I likewise inclose copy of my answer to Mr. Baring stating that, if the sentence on Achmet Aga is reversed, or the other prisoners acquitted in the face of conclusive evidence, he should return at once to Constantinople, as it was not desirable that he should be present at a delusive inquiry.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 124.

Mr. Baring to Sir H. Elliot.

Philippopoli, December 28, 1876, 8 A.M.

(Telegraphic.)

VASSA EFFENDI has been ordered to Monastir; leaves to-morrow morning. Christian members now in minority. Saadoullah Bey afraid of his own act and regrets sentence on Achmet Agha of Doriat: fears displeasure of Porte. He would not object to hang the man, but has objected to applying Article 57 of Code in which word rebel is used. He saw Ikiades Effendi to-day; told him he was in despair, and that the sentence must be altered; begged him to find some other Article applicable to case. Ikiades Effendi replied this was impossible; he could not go back upon what he had done.

I think Saadoullah would like to pass illegal sentence which would be reversed. Ikiades will possibly resign, and then Commission will do nothing, as he is the only man who can hold his own with Turkish members in legal discussion. Yesterday case of Ahmet Teiaoursch of Kara Boulak was discussed, and it was decided that he was a ringleader, which practically condemns him. As he lays down principle that Achmet Agha of Dospat was not alone responsible, it will be difficult for Turkish members to save other prisoners. This increases Ikiades embarrassment. Will you instruct me as to what course I am to pursue if Ikiades Effendi resigns, Achmet Agha's sentence is altered, or if the three prisoners are acquitted?

Inclosure 2 in No. 124.

Mr. Baring to Sir H. Elliot.

Philippopoli, December 26, 1876.

Sir,

BY my despatch of the 21st instant I had the honour to inform your Excellency that the public trials of the prisoners implicated in the Batak affair had been brought to a close on the previous day. When the last prisoner, Alish Pehlivan, was removed, the Commission proceeded at once to deliberate on the judgments which should be passed.

The President commenced by making a short introductory speech, in which he dwelt upon the importance of the duties entrusted to the Commission, and begged them to put aside all external influences and personal considerations, and to judge the cases brought before them fairly and impartially. He then went on to say that Achmet Agha of Dospat had commanded the Bashi-Bazouks who went to Batak, and that, therefore, the evidence bearing on his case should be examined first.

A remark was made to the effect that Achmet Agha had received no positive orders to go to Batak; but the President replied that he was sent to restore tranquillity in the country, and that, as there was an insurrection at Batak, he was justified in going to suppress it, but that he was responsible for his actions while engaged in that duty.

Saadoullah Bey also said that, as the Commission had already decided that crimes had been committed by the Bashi-Bazouks at Batak, that question need not again be touched upon.

To facilitate the deliberations, the President was of opinion that the Commission should fix its attention upon two points, viz., the murder of the "Tchorbajis," who had been sent out to Achmet Agha to surrender the arms of the village; and, secondly, the massacre of a number of men near the church after the village had been totally burnt.

Ikiades Effendi thought that it would be easier to decide upon the nature of the crimes committed, and then discover the perpetrators. The crimes themselves he would divide into three classes, viz., murder, arson, and pillage.

Yovantcho Effendi was of opinion that another point should be taken into consideration, viz., whether these crimes were committed by order of Achmet Agha or not, but the necessity of doing so was disputed by Wassa Effendi and others on the ground that Achmet Agha's responsibility was an accepted fact.

The discussion was then adjourned till the day following, the 21st instant, when, finally, it was decided to put the main questions in the following forms:—

Had the arms been surrendered on Sunday (the Bashi-bazouks having first approached the village on Friday), three days after the commencement of the fighting?

2ndly. Had men been taken out of the church on Monday, and after having been kept for the night at the place known as the "Chiurlik," were they massacred in the village on the following day?

It would be useless for me to report to your Excellency at length all the details of the discussions which arose upon the various points from the 21st instant up to the present date, and it will, no doubt, suffice if I give but a very short sketch of what took place.

The surrender of the arms took place in the following way:—On the Saturday, a man, named Anartus, was sent from the village to treat with Achmet Agha, but was shot down on the road. The next day Achmet Agha sent a gipsy into the village to say that he wished to speak to some of the head men; accordingly, some of them went to him, and upon receiving a solemn promise that no harm should be done to the village if the arms were given up, they consented to return and tell the people to surrender.

The arms were collected, loaded in carts, and taken to Achmet Agha. The number of Tchorbajis who accompanied them is differently estimated at between twelve and eighteen, but what is quite certain is that none of them were seen again. Among them was a man named Vranikow, and it is his wife Sofia who gave the clearest and most important evidence upon what took place. She accompanied her husband on both his visits to Achmet Agha, and she deposes that after the arms had been handed over, the latter ordered the Bashi-Bazouks to tie the Bulgarians' hands behind their backs. She distinctly saw Mehmed of Derkovo tie two men while a short thickset Pehlivan (wrestler), of Bansonna, in the uniform of a Zaptieh, bound her husband. They were then all led away by Molhah Ali, the son of Achmet Agha, and Fettah Pehlivan and others, and in a few minutes she heard shots and piercing cries.

Afterwards she saw the corpses with the heads severed from the bodies, while one man, Triandophile, had his eyes torn out and was half roasted.

Other witnesses deposed to having seen the corpses, and it was altogether proved beyond doubt that three men had been massacred in cold blood and in the most barbarous manner.

The Turkish members tried their best to impugn the veracity of the evidence, and to find out discrepancies which might favour the causes of the prisoners, but eventually they were obliged to yield to the convincing arguments of their Christian colleagues, and the Commission decided that the arms had been surrendered.

After this question had been answered in the affirmative, it was thought necessary to decide whether the men who surrendered the arms had been murdered, and, if so, did the murder take place on the spot where the arms were given up, or while they were on their way back to the village. This question was also answered in the affirmative after a short discussion.

The deposition of Kristosko Oglilan Petri was then read, in which it was stated that all through Sunday night the Bashi-Bazouks massacred the people in and about the church; that on Monday the survivors were taken outside the village, and on the following morning about 200 men were separated from the crowd by Achmed Tchaouch of Kara Boulak, taken as far as the church, and then massacred. Serafim Georgi Oglilan Velo's deposition stated that he had seen Achmet Agha deliver three men to a Bashi-Bazouk, with orders to take them to Tatar Bazardjik.

Sofia Wrankovitza and Yakow, a Bulgarian, of Rakitovo, deposed that they had seen the men separated from the crowd, the latter witness, however, estimating their number at about sixty or seventy; they had not heard any order given by Achmet Agha.

Kourouldjou Selim, the Albanian guard, confirmed the statement about the separation of the men, and said that Achmet Tchaoush and the Zaptieh Halil Pehlivan, of Baratoun, had accompanied them. As regards the latter, however, the witness, when examined a short time ago, denied the accuracy of his depositions, and said he had been mistaken. Papas Oghlon Todor had deposed that he was led away with the other men, but that he was saved by Kutchuk Halil, who is now in prison on a charge of robbery; and the latter had confirmed Todor's statement, and had spoken to the presence of Achmet Agha in the crowd when the separation took place. Dimitri Oghlan Youan had deposed that Achmet Agha had given the order for the separation, and that he had seen the Bashi-Bazouks returning with a quantity of clothes spotted with blood.

Two men were known to have escaped from this massacre, but they were afterwards murdered by some gipsies.

The questions then put to the Commission were: 1st. Were a number of men separated from the crowd? 2ndly. Were they massacred?

In the discussion, the Turkish members dwelt upon the discrepancy in the evidence respecting the number of men, though this is an unimportant point, a cold-blooded massacre has been committed, and as regards the criminality of the murderers, it matters little whether they butchered 50 people or 200.

Porter Effendi declared that he believed that only a very few people had been killed at all, and that nearly the whole original population was now living in the village. The place had been surrounded by Bashi-Bazouks, and, therefore, escape was impossible. Never closing to take into consideration the fact that it has been proved that nearly all the men who now survive owe their safety to their having fled to the mountains.

Eventually, however, both these questions were answered in the affirmative.

It was then proposed by Ikiades Effendi that the Commission should decide whether the crimes of arson and pillage had been committed. This the President and Selim Effendi opposed on the grounds that there was no advantage in so doing, but the Commission by a majority of votes adopted Ikiades Effendi's proposal.

It was unanimously agreed that pillage had been committed, but Porter Effendi expressed his dissent as regards the burning. He said, that if there had been a strong breeze one house taking fire by accident might destroy a whole village. To meet his objections the deposition of Abdi Tchoush was read, in which it is stated that after the surrender the Bashi-Bazouks set fire to the houses.

It was then admitted, but in a somewhat qualified form that arson had been committed.

After all these points had been fully discussed and accepted, it only remained to be settled, how far each of the prisoners was guilty of the crimes, the committal of which had been admitted?

The case of Achmet Agha was taken first.

Yovewtchow Effendi was of opinion that Achmet Agha was implicated in the murder of the Tchorbajis, because having held the chief command of the Bashi-Bazouks, he had taken no steps to prevent it, and had not reported it to the authorities.

Wassa Effendi supported this view, and added that the Tchorbajis had gone out to surrender the arms at Achmet Agha's own request, he having guaranteed their safety.

Salim Effendi said he doubted whether the arms had been given up directly to Ahmed Agha, but that in all probability he was aware of the committal of the murder.

Ikiades Effendi said that Achmet Agha, a Government Officer, had taken no steps to prevent the committal of the crimes respecting the existence of which the Commission had satisfied itself, he was implicated in them, and must be held responsible.

Porter Effendi endeavoured to show that Achmet Agha was not responsible for all the acts of the Bashi-Bazouks, and that, moreover, he had tried to stop them from killing them after the surrender.

At this point Vassa Effendi shewed that he had seen with regret that the Commission had formed itself into two parties, the Christians as it were conducting the prosecution, and the Mussulmans the defence.

This remark gave rise to considerable discussion as the Mussulman members of course scouted the idea that they wished to defend the guilty, but said they were only actuated by a sincere desire to see justice done properly.

Ikiades Effendi then said that Achmet Agha's offences were punishable under Articles 56 and 57 of the Ottoman Code, and this assertion gave rise to a long legal discussion between him and Porter Effendi, who held that these Articles could only be applied to rebels such as the Bulgarians, and that the term could not properly be applied to Achmet Agha, who was a Government Officer.

Ikiades Effendi replied, that whatever may have been the attitude to the Bulgarians before the surrender of the arms, they were entitled to the protection of the law after they had done so; that Achmet Agha by breaking faith with them had put himself in the position of a rebel, and as to his being a Government Officer, the State could not acknowledge as its servant a man who had been guilty of such foul crimes.

Salim Effendi remarked that the Articles above-mentioned could be applied to Achmet Agha, if it could be proved that he was in any way implicated in any one of the crimes of murder, arson, and pillage, but he subsequently made an attempt to modify by his statement by saying that it was necessary he should be implicated in all these.

After a long discussion on the application of the law by four votes to one, the Commission condemned Achmet Agah to death, under the 56th and 57th Articles of the Code, Perter Effendi dissenting on the grounds that the clauses in question do not apply to the case.

I have the honour to inclose a translation of the decision, in virtue of which, Achmet Agha is condemned to death; there are two expressions in it open to objection, viz., the one that speaks of two or three days "fighting," and the other that mentions "a certain number of arms" as having been surrendered.

The truth is, that what little fighting there ever was took place on Friday and Saturday, and never extended to the third day, Sunday. And there is not a shadow of doubt that all the arms were given up on Sunday, and not a portion. Otherwise, how was it that those men who had retained their arms did not make some attempt to defend their lives when they found Achmet Agha had broken his promise, and that they and their wives and children were being butchered.

As it is only Edib Effendi, who in his report speaks of fighting at the church, and as he was not only prejudiced, but totally ignorant of the subject which he pretended to treat, his statement is simply not worth discussing.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER BARING.

Inclosure 3 in No. 124.

Decision sentencing Achmet Agha to Death.

(Translation.)

IT results, from inquiries made by the Commission, that after some two or three days' fighting at Batak acts of murder and pillage took place there after the surrender of a certain number ("fair taken") of arms, and subsequent examinations have established the fact that Achmet Agha, having been the leader of the men who committed these acts, was aware of the committal of the former crime, and took an active part in the latter. Under these circumstances his offences are held to come within the scope of the latter part of Article 56 and the whole of Article 57 of the Code, and Achmet Agha is accordingly condemned to death in conformity with those Articles.

(Signed) SADOULLAH.
YOVANTCHO.
SALIM.
IKIADES.
WASSA.

Inclosure 4 in No. 124.

Sir H. Elliot to Midhat Pasha.

Péra, le 1 Janvier, 1877.

Chère Altesse,

JE viens de recevoir de Mr. Baring une nouvelle bien fâcheuse. Il paraît que la Commission avait décidé, par une majorité de cinq contre un, pour la peine capitale sur Achmet Agha de Despat.

Maintenant il paraît que Saadoullah Bey, craignant de mécontenter la Porte, voudrait revenir sur cette décision.

En attendant Vassa Effendi a reçu des ordres de partir immédiatement pour Monastir, laissant ainsi les membres Chrétiens dans la minorité.

Les autres ne veulent pas revenir sur la décision déjà adoptée et donneront probablement leur démission, si le Président insiste sur la modification de la sentence.

Dans ce cas je dois rappeler immédiatement Mr. Baring, qui ne pourra pas assister à un pareil procédé.

Votre Altesse jugera de l'effet que tout cela produira sur l'opinion publique, et sachant que vous avez toujours voulu que l'enquête fût sérieuse, je suis convaincu que vous verrez comme il est urgent de faire comprendre à Saadoullah Bey qu'il n'y a pas à revenir sur une décision à laquelle il s'était lui-même associé avec la presque unanimité de ses collègues.

Je vous prie, &c.
(Signé) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure 5 in No. 124.

Midhat Pasha to Sir H. Elliot.

Le 1 Janvier, 1877.

Chère Excellence,

J'AI l'honneur d'accuser réception de votre billet du 31 Décembre. N'ayant pas encore reçu aucune communication concernant Achmet Aglou, j'ai télégraphié à Saadoullah Bey afin qu'il m'expédie immédiatement le dossier de cette affaire, pour qu'après en avoir pris connissance, nous puissions agir.

Quant à la question de la composition actuelle de la Commission, je pense qu'il doit y avoir un malentendu. Attendu que cette Commission, qui était formée de quatre membres Musulmans, Saadoullah Bey, Hamdi Bey, Ismail Bey, et Salim Bey, et par quatre membres Chrétiens, Aho Effendi, Ikiades Effendi, Yovantchow Effendi, et Wassa Effendi, ne se trouve pas modifiée par la nomination à d'autres fonctions de Wassa Effendi, Hamdi Bey ayant antérieurement donné sa démission et n'en faisant plus parti.

Je suis heureux, cher Excellence, de vous donner ces éclaircissements qui, je l'espère, vous tranquilliseront, et je vous prie, &c.

(Signé) MIDHAT.

Inclosure 6 in No. 124.

Sir H. Elliot to Mr. Baring.

Constantinople, January 1, 1877.

Sir,

UPON communicating with the Porte on the subject of your telegram of the which, owing to the interruption of the lines, did not reach me until yesterday, I was informed that no communication had been received from the President of the Commission respecting Achmet Agha, but orders have now been sent to have the proceedings at once forwarded here.

The Commissioners having declared themselves by an overwhelming majority for the condemnation of Achmet Aglu, it is impossible now to permit the decision to be reversed.

Should this be done, or the other prisoners acquitted in the face of conclusive evidence, it will be proper for you at once to return to Constantinople, as your presence at a delusive enquiry is not desirable.

You may, however, use your discretion if you see reason for believing that any good could be effected by remaining a short time longer.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 125.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 3.) *Constantinople, January* 4, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAD the honour this morning to receive your Lordship's despatch, No. 884, respecting the address from the Greek Community of Philippopolis protesting against any part of the country south of the Balkans being included in a scheme of autonomy, and directing me to inform the memorialists that their memorandum had reached Her Majesty's Government, and would receive the attention of Her Majesty's Representatives at the Conference.

MM. Psichari and Sarakini having called upon me in the forenoon I was able at once to execute your Lordship's instruction, and I endeavoured at the same time to

satisfy them that though Her Majesty's Government had been obliged to limit their present action to the Provinces where there had been disturbances threatening the general peace, they took an equal interest in the Greek populations, and would always encourage the adoption of measures calculated to advance their prosperity.

The two gentlemen insisted that the course which was being pursued was in the highest degree detrimental to Greek interests. They had, they said, nothing to fear from Turkish encroachment, but they had every cause to dread that of the Slavs, over whom Russia would acquire an irresistible influence by a guaranteed autonomic administration being granted to the Slav Provinces without any such equivalent being secured to the Greeks.

The Greek population was unanimous in this opinion. Addresses from Thessaly and Epirus were being spontaneously sent in urging the Porte not to consent to the proposals of the Powers, and upon that point there was no difference between the views of all the Christians of the Empire and those of the Mussulmans.

They spoke with especial indignation of the creation of a Bulgaria extending to the south of the Balkans, but I told them there was no question of the creation of any Bulgaria at all, and that if the reforms were to be applied to some southern districts, which had suffered in the recent disturbances, the Greek population would profit by them as much as the Bulgarians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 126.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 4. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 2, 1877.

THE Grand Logothete, who accompanied the Greek Patriarch on a visit to General Ignatiew, has given me confidentially the substance of what passed between them.

The Logothete said that the Ambassador had been much irritated on finding that the Patriarch had already called on the other foreign representatives.

I had myself been too unwell to receive him, but he saw the Marquis of Salisbury, to whom he expressed his views on the injury the course which was followed by the European Powers would inflict upon the Greek provinces.

His discussion with the Russian Ambassador appears to have been very animated.

Upon the General observing that the Plenipotentiaries at Constantinople were here in the character of firemen (using the Turkish expression of Touloumbadgees) to extinguish a conflagration that was going on, the Patriarch answered sharply that they would not be firemen, but incendiaries, if they insisted on measures which would extend the conflagration to all parts of the empire.

The Ambassador added, however, that he had himself wished to put all the provinces on the same footing, but that, upon making the suggestion, I had vehemently opposed it.

This purely imaginary assertion was not for a moment credited by either the Patriarch or the Logothete.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 127.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 7.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 8, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship, herewith, copy of a confidential report from Mr. Sandison, of a conversation with the Grand Vizier on the possible future policy of Turkey with regard to Russia in view of the proceedings of the Conference.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 127.

Mr. Sandison to Sir H. Elliot.

(Confidential.) *Pera, January 3, 1877.*

Sir,

IN speaking of the Conference, the Grand Vizier told me yesterday that he considered its proceedings as the most providential thing that could possibly happen to Turkey, which, having all along placed every reliance on the strict maintenance of the treaty of Paris, could now open her eyes to the glaring fact that it no longer exists, and would thus be able to realize her true situation for the future. Thus left to deal with Russia single handed, she would trust to fate, or perhaps fall into the arms of that power as the safest and wisest course left open to Turkey.

He would, however, be the last man in the country to advocate such an alternative, which was repulsive to his own feelings, and not creditable to Turkey, which he was anxious should continue to follow her traditional and steady policy.

He still hoped, he added, there would be some change in public opinion in England inasmuch as just and sensible people might become alive to the fact that it is not fair to sacrifice the interests of a whole empire to Parliamentary considerations.

His Highness concluded the conversation by stating that General Ignatiew has been heard to say that nothing would be easier for Russia than to come to an understanding with Turkey, but that it was not possible for him to state in writing (as he was apparently desired to do) on what terms this could be effected, so long as he was obliged to act in concert with his colleagues at the Conference during the present moment.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. SANDISON.

No. 128.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 8.) *Constantinople, January 4, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose the copy of a despatch from Mr. Consul Holmes,* reverting to Canon Liddon's statement of having seen persons impaled on the banks of the Save.

Although I believe no one any longer doubts Canon Liddon to have been deceived as to to what he supposed himself to have seen, as Mr. Holmes considers his own good faith impugned in the letters published on the subject, he has requested me to say that, if your Lordship sees no objection to it, he would be glad that his present explanation should be made public also.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 129.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 9.) *Constantinople, January 4, 1877.*

My Lord,

I RECEIVED a letter last November from Dr. Thomson, of the Bible Society at Constantinople, stating that he had been informed that a number of Bulgarians were detained in the prison at Uscup on a general charge of being concerned in insurrectionary plans, and I requested Her Majesty's Consul at Salonica to endeavour to ascertain the facts of the case.

I have the honour to inclose an extract of Dr. Thomson's letter, together with a copy of a despatch which I have recently received from Mr. Blunt on the subject.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

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* See No. 137.

Inclosure in No. 129.

Dr. Thomson to Sir H. Elliot.

(Extract.) *Constantinople, November 14, 1876.*

I AM informed that there are now, or were, on November 4th, in prison at Uscup, and had been so for about four months, some twenty-seven Bulgarians, on the general charge of being concerned in insurrectionary plans, but with no specific charge whatever that can be brought against them. My informant also states that their number was thirty-nine at first, but that about a fortnight before he wrote twelve of their number purchased their liberty by the payment of several hundred Turkish liras. The origin of their imprisonment, he says, was as follows:—

In or near Kotchani, or Katshanik, near Uscup, a priest, on returning from Divine service, is said to have found his house in the possession of a number of Turks, said to be seven, who were offering violence to his eldest daughter. A younger daughter had escaped observation. On hearing this, without saying a word, he got ready his horse, mounted his younger daughter upon it, quietly secured the doors of his house, and set fire to it; and then, mounting behind his daughter, galloped off, probably to Montenegro or to Servia, and has not since been heard of.

As this took place just at the time when the outbreak took place in Bulgaria, the authorities at once concluded that it was the beginning of the insurrection in that neighbourhood, and immediately sent thither a number of regular troops, Circassian and Bashi-Bazouks, who soon pillaged the whole district, named Malesehovo, and reduced it to misery, though it is affirmed that no tendency to insurrection existed at all among the people.

As a further precaution, the thirty-nine individuals above referred to were apprehended and lodged in prison as hostages for their fellows, being all heads of families and persons of some consideration. After having been confined elsewhere for some weeks, they were brought to Uscup about four months ago, where twenty-seven of them still are.

Your Excellency may think this a romance rather than a fact, and I confess there are several particulars which I could have wished had been given in greater detail. But the twenty-seven men in prison are no mere imagination, and my informant is a man of great sense and truthfulness. He certainly would not knowingly report to me a fable instead of sober truth, nor has he any prejudice against the Turkish Government as such. He has urged me to try and do something for these poor sufferers, who are languishing undeservedly in prison, and who have already suffered severely in health, property, and comfort, and all through the excusable, perhaps, yet still reckless haste of the authorities. And certainly, though one might excuse the action of the Government in the first instance, it is surely high time now to set these men at liberty, if there is really no accusation that can be laid to their charge.

May I therefore beg your Excellency to take such measures as you may think proper to ascertain what amount of truth there is in the above matter, which I have felt bound to report to you, and to act therein, as I am sure your Excellency's sense of justice and compassion will dictate, should it unhappily be found that the facts are as I have reported them.

No. 130.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 10.) *Constantinople, January 4, 1877.*

My Lord,

THE inclosed further reports from Mr. Baring of the proceedings of the Philippopolis Commission exhibit more clearly than perhaps anything that has been written, the cold-blooded and treacherous atrocity of the Batak massacre, for which the prime actor, Achmet Agha, has at length been condemned to death.

The delay in sending the sentence to the Porte has been a very suspicious circumstance, accompanied, as it has been, by the evident desire of some of the Mussulman members of the Commission, to find a loophole of escape for the prisoner; but I have again to-day received assurances from Safvet Pasha, to whom I spoke on the subject, that full justice should be done.

No capital sentence is carried out until it has been confirmed by the Porte, except upon very unusual emergencies, and the ordinary course must be followed in this case.

I inclose the copy of a report from Mr. Sandison, whom I had also directed to press the Grand Vizier to insist upon the execution of the sentence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 130.

Mr. Baring to Sir H. Elliot.

Philippopoli, December 28, 1876.

Sir,

I HAD the honour to inform your Excellency to-day by telegraph that Wassa Effendi had been appointed Mouavin to the Vilayet of Monastir. He has been ordered to return to Constantinople at once, and he consequently leaves to-morrow morning.

The withdrawal of a Christian from the Commission at this critical moment, when the sentences to be passed on the prisoners implicated in the Batak massacre are under consideration, is extremely undesirable, as it gives the Turkish members a decided majority, and I fear also that it must be looked upon as a proof that the Porte have no sincere desire to see real justice done.

Had it not been for the attitude lately assumed by the Turkish members, including the President, I should not have considered myself justified in making this remark; but I regret to say that throughout the course of the late discussions they have shown a strong bias in favour of the prisoners, and have rather acted the part of counsel for the defence than that of impartial judges.

It is true, as I have already reported to your Excellency privately, that Achmet Agha has been condemned to death, and a decision has been come to with regard to the case of Achmet Tchaoush, of Kara Boulak, in the face of which it will be very difficult not to condemn him also.

But these decisions were only arrived at after the most vehement discussion, during which the Turkish members used every argument in their power to save the prisoners, and the result can only be attributed to the very firm attitude of their Christian colleagues.

After Ismail Bey left for Constantinople, the President, who, no doubt, had been a good deal influenced by him, showed every disposition to act fairly, and seemed also desirous of bringing the trial to a speedy termination. Since the nomination, however, of Midhat Pasha to the office of Grand Vizier, I perceive a marked change in his conduct, the reason of which one need not go far to discover.

Saadoulah Bey is, of course, perfectly well aware that Ismail Bey stands high in favour with the present Grand Vizier, and he does not know how far the former may have reflected the views of his patron.

He is consequently now afraid of his own acts, and shrinks from doing anything by which he thinks he might possibly incur the displeasure of those high in office. He would now go any length to recall or alter the sentence passed on Monday last on Achmet Agha, and he yesterday implored Ikiades Effendi to suggest some means by which this might be done. He does not so much object to hanging Achmet Agha, but he wishes to avoid doing so under Article 57 of The Ottoman Code, in which the word rebels (eshkia) is used.

The employment of this term would place the Bashi-Bazouks who destroyed Batak on a level with the Bulgarian insurgents, and would characterize their movement as an illegal one, though the Commission, in order to save the Government, have decided that till the villages surrendered their arms Achmet Agha's acts were justifiable.

Ikiades Effendi on being appealed to by the President replied that he could not go back upon what he had done, and that it was impossible to bring any other Article of the Code to bear upon the case. If his Excellency was resolved to modify the sentence, he could telegraph to the Porte, demanding the recall of the recalcitrant member.

Ikiades Effendi thus finds himself in a position of considerable difficulty; he must either place himself in direct conflict with the President, or he must give what he considers to be an illegal decision. It is not impossible that the matter may be settled by his resigning, which will be a misfortune for the Commission, as he has thoroughly mastered all the details of the evidence, and he is, besides, the only Christian who can hold his own with Salim Effendi and Porter Effendi in discussions on points of law.

I have a strong suspicion that the President would not object altogether to pass a sentence which, owing to some legal irregularity, would be reversed at Constantinople.

Be this as it may, Saadoulah Bey would, I believe, have no particular objection to sacrificing Achmet Agha to European public opinion, but he would like him alone to suffer for the Batak atrocities. The other three prisoners he would wish to save. Ahmed Tchaoush, of Kara Boulak, and Metto Bektash, are merely ignorant peasants, whose chance placed in the position of leaders of Bashi-Bazouks, and were no other men implicated it would be easy to obtain their execution. But if they are condemned as ringleaders it will be very difficult not to place Alish Pehlivan in the same category, and to rescue him from the gallows the Turkish members would willingly acquit the other two.

Alish Pehlivan is a man of some influence in his district, and has money and powerful friends, both here and elsewhere. It is easy to see from his manners and general bearing that he is a superior man to his fellow prisoners.

The question put to the Commission on the 26th instant respecting the case of Achmet Tchaoush, of Kara Boulak, was as follows:—

"Was he (Ahmed) one of the leaders of the band of rebels or not?" ("Djemieti Shekavetin rouessa-sundan oloub olmadeghi ?")

The answer was in the affirmative, Salim Effendi dissenting altogether, and Porter Effendi maintaining that the man was only the leader of those Bashi-Bazouks who came from Kara Boulak, and, consequently, only responsible for their acts.

This decision is a most important one, as it practically condemns Achmet Tchaoush, and, moreover, lays down the principle that others as well as Achmet Agha are responsible for what went on at Batak. It will not be easy, in face of the evidence, to prove that the other two prisoners were not ringleaders; and, now that the entire responsibility cannot be thrown upon Achmet Agha, their condemnation should follow as a matter of course.

Yesterday being the 1st day of Bairam the Commission did not sit, and I have just received a message informing me that the President is unwell, and that no sitting will be held to-day.

In view of the possible complication which may arise out of this state of things, I have the honour to request your Excellency to be good enough to instruct me as to what course I should pursue should the sentence passed on Achmet Agha be altered, or should the remaining three prisoners be acquitted.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER BARING.

Inclosure 2 in No. 130.

Mr. Baring to Sir H. Elliot.

Philippopoli, December 29, 1876.

Sir,

ON the 26th instant, the day after sentence of death had been passed on Achmet Agha, the Commission met to consider the case of Achmet Tchaoush of Kara Boulak.

Wassa Effendi, when asked his opinion respecting how far the prisoner was implicated in the crimes committed at Batak, replied that he had no doubt of his guilt; he had been a leader of Bashi-Bazouks, though not the Commander of all the irregular forces, and on the Tuesday he had himself taken charge of the men who were separated from the crowd outside the village, and who had been massacred at the church.

This view was also supported by Yovantcho Effendi.

The President remarked that the acknowledged leader of the Bashi-Bazouks was Achmet Agha, and as such he had been condemned to death; for this reason it was impossible to consider Achmet Tchaoush as a leader also, his responsibility not being equal with that of Achmet Agha.

Ikiades Effendi replied that had Achmet Agha been a Commander of regular troops this objection would no doubt have some force; but the Bashi-Bazouks of every village were led by their own Chief, and it had been proved that Achmet Tchaoush had commanded the men of Kara Boluk, and that he had acted independently of any one else. In fact, he had arrived at Batak before Achmet Agha did. The law made no distinction between the leaders of a mob assembled for illegal objects.

The President then said that if every ringleader was held responsible for the acts of the men under his command, Achmet Agha must only be held responsible for what was done by the Bashi-Bazouks of Dospat; but Ikiades Effendi replied that Achmet Agha's responsibility was twofold—he was a Government officer and a leader of Bashi-Bazouks.

Salim Effendi observed that Achmet Tchaoush had denied having been a leader, and that the only evidence which tended to prove his leadership was the deposition of Achmet Agha, who had stated that he had gone to Yeni-Mahalle at the head of 250 men. He also said that Achmet Tchaoush could not be judged under Articles 56 and 57 of the Code, as they only applied to a mob collected for an illegal purpose, which term could not be applied to the Bashi-Bazouks.

Ukindes Effendi replied that to his mind there was no apparent difference between such a mob and men who, though assembled in the first instance for a legal object, had subsequently committed crimes against the State. He referred to the Articles I have mentioned above, saying that they clearly made no distinction between the different leaders of a mob, all of whom were held to be equally responsible.

After much discussion a decision was signed, affirming the equal responsibility of the leaders of the illegally assembled mob (Djemiet-i-Shekavet).

To this decision followed the question whether Achmet Tchaoush had been one of these leaders or not.

Salim Effendi and Perter Effendi argued that the weight of evidence was against the supposition, but the majority of the Commission eventually answered the questions in the affirmative.

Judgment was deferred until after the Bairam.

In my despatch of yesterday's date I pointed out to your Excellency the importance of this decision; when, however, I called upon the President, who is confined to his house by illness, I regret to say that the whole tenor of his conversation convinced me that he would like to modify it, and that if Achmet Tchaoush is condemned at all, it will not be as a responsible leader of the Djemiet-i-Shekavet.

Saadoulah Bey was evidently not aware that I had carefully taken down the Turkish words of the decision, and told me accordingly that by its terms the different leaders could only be held responsible for the acts of the men immediately under their command.

When, however, I quoted to him the words of the decision he had himself signed, he said I must have observed from the remarks that had fallen from the different members of the Commission during the discussion which preceded the signature of the paper, that there had been no intention of fastening equal responsibility with that of Achmet Agha on Achmet Tchaoush or any other man.

I remarked that I had perfectly well heard the observation to which his Excellency referred, but that I did not see how they now could be taken into consideration. The Commission had signed a certain decision, the meaning of which was as plain as words could make it; if any member had objected he need not have signed, but a decision of this description could not be accepted with mental reservations.

His Excellency then asked me whether I really thought that a man like Achmet Tchaoush was as responsible as Achmet Agha.

To this I emphatically replied that I did, basing my assertions on the terms of the law.

Unfortunately the Mussulman members having now a clear majority, can do exactly what they like, and their strength has been greatly increased by the arrival of Ismail Bey of which I informed your Excellency to-day by telegraph.

It is true that he is accompanied by a Christian Abro Effendi, about whose opinions I cannot speak with any degree of certainty, as he only sat on the Commission here for a very short time before proceeding to Slimnia. However, as he cannot possibly have mastered all the details of the cases he will have to assist in judging, it is more than probable that he will vote with the Turkish majority.

Ismail Bey's views are too well known to your Excellency to render it necessary for me to add anything about them.

I now cannot help having a strong suspicion that the President has communicated the sentence on Achmet Agha to the Porte, and that he has received in reply some expression of disapproval.

I cannot, of course, possibly tell whether it is the sentence itself or the form of it that the Porte objects to, but looking at the extreme anxiety of the President to get the sentence altered and to minimize the importance of the decision respecting Achmet Tchaoush, as well as to the sudden removal of Wassa Effendi and the equally sudden return of Ismail Bey, who, it was said, was going to Constantinople after leaving Slimnia, I cannot but attribute this vehement action in favour of the culprits to some instructions or suggestions from high quarters.

I do not put this forward as a positive fact, but merely as a supposition of my own, justified, I think, by all that has been passing for the last few days before my eyes.

My telegram to your Excellency about Ismail Bey should have been dispatched early this morning, but owing to an interruption on the line it could not be sent till the evening, when the telegraph clerk accepted it, but said it would probably be delayed in transmission.

Postal communications are also temporarily suspended, owing to an accident on the railway.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER BARING.

Inclosure 3 in No. 130.

Mr. Sandison to Sir H. Elliot.

Pera, January 4, 1877.

Sir,

THE Grand Vizier desired me to inform your Excellency that a telegram has been received from Sadoulah Bey, the President of the Commission at Philippopoli, stating that Achmet Agha, of Despot, has been condemned to death, but that the formality of communicating the sentence to the accused has not yet been fulfilled. This, the Grand Vizier considered, had better not be done until after the confirmation of the sentence by the Council of Ministers, to which it will be submitted, the High Court of Justice being on the point of undergoing certain modifications since the proclamation of the Constitution.

His Highness stated, moreover, that Achmet Agha, having held the rank of captain in the police force, he would consider whether it would not be more proper to have the man shot instead of causing him to be hanged, adding, that in either case the execution will have to be undertaken in presence of a military force, under the peculiar circumstances of the district of Philippopolis.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SANDISON.

No. 131.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 11.)

Constantinople, January 5, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 10 of yesterday's date, I have received a telegram from Mr. Baring, informing me that Achmet Tchaoush, of Kara Boulak, was sentenced to hard labour for life, on the 3rd instant, by the Philippopoli Commission.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 132.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 12.)

Constantinople, January 5, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship a translation of the Imperial Decree which has just appeared, providing for the issue of an additional amount of paper currency. This has now been increased by 7,000,000 Turkish pounds, thus raising the entire emission to 10,000,000, for the redemption of which the Decree provides an apparently efficient security.

Of these 7,000,000, 2,500,000 are to be devoted to the most necessary expenses of the Treasury, 2,000,000 are to be kept in reserve, and not to be put into circulation except in case of urgent necessity; 2,400,000 are to be applied to the reduction of the Floating Debt, and 100,000 to remain as provisional capital for the extinction of the larger copper currency.

The clause in the Decree stating that the Floating Debt is to be reduced at a price to be agreed upon with the creditors is an objectionable one, as implying that the Government renounce all idea of satisfying the just demands of this class of creditors in full—a determination which scarcely harmonizes with the recent abolition of the Decree of October 6, 1875.

The present paper currency is to be redeemed at the rate of 600,000*l.* per annum:

temporary provision being made for this by the receipts of the tithes and the sheep-tax from certain portions of the vilayet of Smyrna.

The destruction by fire of the notes withdrawn from circulation is to take place every month, and the administration and collection of the revenues necessary to effect this are to be altogether undertaken by a Mixed Commission consisting of six members, selected partly from functionaries of the Ottoman Bank, and partly from capitalists of established probity and character.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 132.

Extract from "La Turquie" of January 4, 1877.

Décret.

ON sait que le Gouvernement Impérial, pour faire face aux dépenses extraordinaires nécessitées par les mouvements militaires qui continuent depuis l'année passée, a émis du papier-monnaie pour une somme de 3,000,000 livres Turques, soit 600,000 bourses.

D'après une décision prise, il a été procédé à une souscription publique, mais, attendu que les événements actuels acquièrent de jour en jour plus de gravité et que les dépenses augmentent en proportion, le Gouvernement Impérial a pris la décision suivante, afin de faire face aux dépenses extraordinaires et de régler une partie de la dette flottante et des emprunts temporaires du Malieh :—

La somme de 3,000,000 de livres de papier-monnaie actuellement en circulation est augmentée de 7,000,000 de livres et portés en total à la somme de 10,000,000 de livres, sous les fortes garanties qui seront spécifiées plus bas et conformément au règlement en vigueur.

De cette somme de 7,000,000 livres, 2,500,000 seront employées dès à présent aux dépenses urgentes du Trésor; 2,000,000 seront réservées par le Trésor et ne seront mises en circulation qu'en cas de besoin; 2,400,000 livres, à l'exception du compte courant avec la Banque Impériale Ottomane qui s'élève à 3,000,000, seront employées pour régler une partie de la dette flottante, suivant un prix qui sera fixé en commun avec les créanciers.

Le reste, soit 100,000 livres, servira de capital provisoire pour le retrait de la circulation des pièces de cuivre de 1 piastre et de 20 paras et pour l'émission de pièces de 5 paras cuivre.

Une somme de 500,000 livres sera chaque année amortie et retirée de la circulation. Cet amortissement aura lieu au moyen des revenus désignés lors de l'émission des 3,000,000 de papier. De plus, il sera affecté à cet amortissement pour un terme de vingt ans un revenu du Trésor de 500,000 livres composé des revenus qui servaient au payement des intérêts de la dette flottante de 300,000 livres, dette qui sera réglée moyennant l'émission présente, et d'une affectation spéciale du Trésor pour 200,000 ayant cours à partir de l'année financière 1293 (1877-78).

Les revenus qui sont affectés à cet amortissement, pendant la première année, sont l'impôt des dîmes des Sandjaks d'Aïdin, de Smyrne, et de Sarroukhan (Vilayet d'Aïdin), impôt qui, l'année passée, s'est élevé à 36,435,000 piastres et l'impôt des moutons des Vilayets d'Aïdin et de Konieh, lequel a atteint l'année passée la somme de 18,400,000 piastres. Toutefois, les Chambres qui seront réunies au mois de Mars prochain, auront la faculté de substituer à ces revenus d'autres allocations pour les années suivantes.

Les susdites affectations seront administrées et perçues par l'intermédiaire de la direction de la Banque Impériale Ottomane de Constantinople avec le concours et l'assistance des autorités locales. Ces revenus ne pourront aucunement être employés ailleurs que pour le retrait du caïmé. C'est pourquoi ils seront remis, contre reçu, aux succursales de la Banque et expédiés à Constantinople pour être versés dans la caisse spéciale qui sera créée à la direction générale de la Banque Impériale Ottomane. Le retrait et la destruction par le feu du caïmé retiré commenceront à la fin du mois de Mai et auront lieu tous les mois.

Cette formalité se fera publiquement et en présence d'une Commission *ad hoc*, dont il sera parlé plus bas. Afin d'assurer le public au sujet du retrait effectif du

caïmé, une loi réglant le mode de destruction sera préparée et publiée avant le mois de Mai.

Une Commission sera formée ayant pour mission de surveiller la prompte perception des susdits revenus, le retrait de la circulation du caïmé et sa destruction par le feu. La présidence de la Commission sera confiée à un personnage compétent choisi par le Gouvernement Impérial.

Les membres de cette Commission, au nombre de six, seront pris parmi les fonctionnaires de la Banque et les capitalistes honorables, sujets Ottomans et étrangers.

Les autorités locales dresseront chaque semaine un bordereau en double des sommes qui seront remises aux succursales de la Banque. L'un de ces bordereaux accompagnés des récépissés des succursales sera envoyé au Ministère des Finances, et l'autre à la susdite Commission. La Commission, à la fin de chaque mois, contrôlera les rentrées de la Banque avec les bordereaux et les récépissés qui lui auront été remis et annoncera par les journaux, dans les limites de la loi respective le jour, le lieu, et la quantité du caïmé détruit par le feu.

Le papier-monnaie, qui sera ainsi détruit mois par mois, doit représenter à la fin de l'année la somme de 500,000 livres. Il est donc nécessaire que la quantité qui sera brûlée le douzième mois complète cette somme. A cet effet, la Commission a pour devoir spécial de faire attention à ce que la somme brûlée chaque mois s'élève en moyenne à 41,600 livres Turques environ.

Dans le cas où ce résultat ne serait pas obtenu, la Commission est tenue d'en aviser à temps l'autorité et la direction de la Banque et de rechercher les moyens de compléter la somme. Enfin la Commission est tenue, à la fin du mois de chaque année, de dresser et de publier un bordereau indiquant les sommes qui ont été brûlées chaque mois pour amortir les 500,000 livres.

Les revenus affectés à l'amortissement de ces 500,000 livres étant considérés comme suffisants, la Commission avisera le Malieh de l'excédant qui resterait dans la caisse après la destruction des 500,000 livres. Cet excédant sera remis par la Banque au Ministère des Finances.

No. 133.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 18.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 6, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose, herewith, a copy of a letter which has been addressed by the Grand Vizier to the Directors of the Ottoman Bank, declaring his intention to abrogate immediately the Iradé of October 6, 1875, which publicly proclaimed the inability of the Turkish Government to meet its engagements.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 133.

Extract from the "Levant Herald" of January 3, 1877.

THE TURKISH DEBT.—ABOLITION OF THE LAW DEFERRING THE PAYMENT OF INTEREST.—THE new Grand Vizier, Midhat Pasha, has taken a step which cannot fail to have a most beneficial effect in removing from the Ottoman Empire the stain of self-proclaimed bankruptcy. His Highness has addressed the following letter, under date of December 27, to the Directors of the Imperial Ottoman Bank :—

"Turkey, in inaugurating a constitutional system, must above all things endeavour to place her laws in harmony with the principles of her new institutions. The law of October 6, 1875, which has brought disorder into the financial economy of the Empire, by shaking its credit and wounding the public feeling of justice and good faith, must be considered from this day forth entirely abrogated, and the Government proposes to present to the Turkish Parliament, as soon as the Chambers shall have met, and after communication with the public creditors, a measure of law calculated to give the fullest possible satisfaction to the rights and to the interests of the holders of its Public Debt, and to safeguard the honour of the Empire."

No. 134.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12, 1877.)

(No. 91.)
Scutari, December 26, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit, herewith, for your Lordship's information, the copy of a despatch I have this day had the honour of addressing to Sir Henry Elliot, reporting the public reading here of the telegraphic summary of the Constitution recently promulgated at Constantinople, and stating that I have observed no marks of satisfaction on the part of the natives at the new rights accorded to them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 134.

Consul Kirby Green to Sir H. Elliot.

Scutari, December 26, 1876.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that, the day before yesterday, the telegraphic summary of the Constitution promulgated at Constantinople was publicly read here, with considerable official ceremonial, by the Vali. I have not observed any satisfaction among the natives, Mohammedans, or Christians, at the new rights accorded to them; but I believe this arises from their being unable to realize their eventual establishment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 135.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12, 1877.)

(No. 92.)
Scutari, December 31, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, the copy of a despatch this day addressed by me to Sir Henry Elliot, furnishing details regarding the emissaries in Miridicia and other revolutionary agitators alluded to in my despatch to his Excellency No. 79 of the 23rd instant, of which copy was inclosed in my despatch to your Lordship, No. 90 of the same date.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 135.

Consul Kirby Green to Sir H. Elliot.

Scutari, December 31, 1876

Sir,

ALTHOUGH I am not disposed to think that any immediate serious consequences are likely to ensue from the proceedings in Miridicia of the emissaries and revolutionary agitators alluded to in the despatch I had the honour to address to your Excellency on the 23rd instant, still I deem it necessary to inform your Excellency that it is reported here that a further sum of money, coming through Montenegro, has reached the Mirdite Chiefs, and that a young Mirdite Roman Catholic priest, named Don Primo, who was brought up in Rome, and who is in correspondence with the Garibaldian Committees in Italy, and has formed projects of raising North Albania into an independent Principality, has recently left his parish of Kalivari, in Miridicia, and proceeded to Cettinjé. I understand that when Don Primo first arrived there, the Prince of Montenegro refused to see him, but on His Highness being informed by the Russian Consul here that he could be confided in, every attention has since been shown to him.

I am also told that Don Giuseppe Vitoli, an Albano-Italian, who was formerly in

Scutari, and who is well known as a revolutionary agitator in Italy, recently returned here, and that he is now in the Mirdite mountains.

I believe that a Dr. Chinzo, a lawyer residing in Palermo, and who visited Scutari a few years ago, is the chief of the Committees formed in Italy for the purpose of bringing about a union between the North Albanians and the Albano-Italians; and that assurances have been given by these Committees to their partizans in this country that they hold 400 men, properly armed and equipped, ready to be thrown into the Albanian mountains, on the first signal of a rising.

I think it further right to report to your Excellency, in confidence, that an impression prevails here that M. Berio, my Italian colleague, is no stranger to these intrigues, and that the Albano-Italian Committees keep him fully informed of their proceedings.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 136.

Acting Consul Freeman to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12, 1877.)

(No. 66. Political.)
Bosna-Serai, December 29, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE to inform your Lordship that on Sunday the 24th instant I received a communication from his Excellency Nasif Pasha, Governor-General of Bosnia, announcing the promulgation on the previous day, at the Sublime Porte, of the new Constitutional laws for the administration of this Empire. Printed notifications of this event, an example and translation of which I inclose herewith, were also distributed to the public, and a salvo of twenty-one guns was fired on the occasion from the fortress.

The same formalities, I am informed, were observed at Mostar; but there, as here, an attempt to get up an illumination of the town signally failed. In fact, the introduction of the new Constitution has been received here with no enthusiasm, I might say, with perfect indifference, and the generality of the population neither understand nor care to understand its tenor.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. B. FREEMAN.

Inclosure in No. 136.

Notification.

(Translation.)

A TELEGRAPHIC despatch has been received from the Grand Vizier, regarding the new Regulations for the Empire, which have been publicly read, and announced by a salvo of artillery, which notifies as follows:—

"By command of His Majesty the Sultan, that the administration of the Empire may be regulated by new laws, a Special Commission has been formed at the Sublime Porte of Ministers and Ulemas, which has enounced a fundamental law, which is to be executed and published.

"Therefore the Edict by Imperial Sign-manual has been read this day, Saturday, in the presence of the Ministers, Mushirs, Ulemas and other officials, and on this fortunate day terminates the absolute system, and a new system is adopted and announced, which the 'Sheriat' and reason confirms for all time, and on this occasion a salvo has been fired of a hundred and one guns. This new system regulates the rights of the State, and establishes for every Osmanli a continuance of the benefits of former salutary reforms, which guarantee personal honour, life and property. Having effected this liberal change, which assures to all Osmanli peoples concord and perfect equality, this joyful intelligence must be communicated to all, and, in token of gratitude to His Imperial Majesty, here also a salvo of one hundred and one guns will be fired, and it will be permitted to all who desire to make rejoicings, and let appropriate expressions of gratitude be sent hence by post.

December 14, 1876.

No. 137.

Consul Holmes to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

Constantinople, January 3, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch and its inclosures, dated the 2nd instant, which I have addressed to Sir Henry Elliot, regarding the impalements stated by Canon Liddon and Mr. Mac Coll to have occurred in Bosnia. The reason why this despatch was not written at an earlier date was the necessity of waiting for Bishop Strossmayer's answer to the letter addressed to him by the Austrian Consul-General in Bosnia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. R. HOLMES.

Inclosure 1 in No. 137.

Consul Holmes to Sir H. Elliot.

Constantinople, January 2, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 3rd November, regarding Canon Liddon's and Mr. Mac Coll's statements of impalement in Bosnia, I now give your Excellency the results of my further inquiries on this subject.

In the first place I beg to inclose a letter written to me by M. de Vienne, the French Consul at Serajevo, who had been making an excursion, a little before Canon Liddon's journey, on the frontiers of Bosnia along the Save, and extending to Novi Bazar; and his explanation appears to me conclusive as to what Canon Liddon and Mr. Mac Coll really saw, namely, a watchman who had mounted on his stake, probably to look at the steamer descending the Save. When I suggested that these gentlemen might have seen the remains of beams on stakes erected to facilitate their drying, I was seeking what might be an explanation according to the best of my experience, not being aware that in the flat country along the Save single poles were adopted as means of obtaining an extended view of the country around.

Secondly, on my late journey to Constantinople I inquired at Brood, on the Save, regarding impalements, and could find no one of any denomination who had so much as heard of anything of the kind.

I then travelled down the Save in a steamer which during the past year has performed alternate voyages with the boat on board which Canon Liddon travelled. I related to the captain and officers what had been stated by that gentleman. The story was received with a general laugh, and declared to have been undoubtedly a joke on the part of the officers of the steamer, which they had expected would have been received as it was intended, but which, on it being taken seriously, they had not ventured to explain. I asked the captain, however, whether he thought it possible that such atrocities could have occurred during a year without his having observed them. He replied that it was utterly impossible; and that if the officers of the other steamer had remarked them, they were bound by standing orders to have reported them to the authorities of the different stations at which they touched. He also said that even if such deeds had been unnoticed by the officers of the steamers of the Save, they could not possibly have failed to attract the attention of all the Slavs on the Austrian side of the river, and would have created a general cry of indignation.

In my despatch to which I have referred above, I stated that my Austrian colleague at Serajevo had, at my request, written to Bishop Strossmayer, to ask some definite explanation as to what he said to Canon Liddon and Mr. Mac Coll. I now inclose copy of a letter from the Consul-General, inclosing Bishop Strossmayer's answer, of which I send an extract containing all that relates to the present subject of discussion.

It will be remarked that the Bishop does not specify what he said to Canon Liddon, and does not mention the word "impalement," but only states in general terms that what he told the English gentlemen he had heard from trustworthy sources. He seems to show a sense of annoyance at being asked to particularize and substantiate what he said. He repeats the idea, originated by certain English writers who have endeavoured to throw discredit on experience which they cannot deny, that English Consuls, and Austrian also, write to order, to which "ils accommodent tout ce qu'ils voient et tout ce qu'ils ne voient pas," and seems to wish to pass by the question of impalement by saying that it does not at all signify what may have been the peculiar nature of the

atrocities commited by the Turks, but the principal thing to consider is whether the Christians can live under the laws of the Koran; and the rest of his letter is a dissertation on the general hopeless position of Christians under Turkish rule, of which I do not give a copy, as it does not concern the immediate matter under consideration, namely, whether impalements have taken place or not.

I would now venture to make a few remarks on the letters of Canon Liddon and Mr. Mac Coll, published in the "Times" and dated the 20th October, which I did not see until after my last despatch was written. These gentlemen had the advantage of sneering at my first despatch on the subject, and at Mr. Stuart Glennie's testimony, on the ground that we seemed to evade the question by referring to localities 100 miles away from those where they had witnessed the impalement. The reason of this was that my only information had been that these gentlemen had "entered Servia by the Bosnian frontier," and had seen the atrocities mentioned at several military stations. Now the only way to enter Servia from the Bosnian frontier is by the Drina. I was puzzled, because I knew it was impossible they could have done so without falling into the hands of a patrol, and being reported at Serajevo; but I had no idea that they had seen what they stated along the Bosnian frontier on the banks of the Save. Had this been known Mr. Stuart Glennie could have stated the fact that he had performed the same journey on the Save within a week of the reverend travellers, and had not heard a word of these pretended impalements, and I should have been able to reply more to the purpose.

I ought perhaps to be thankful for the indulgent consideration of Canon Liddon, who states that every allowance is to be made for Mr. Holmes, "as he is writing to order, and has to make the best of the case before him." I should have thought that any gentleman would have hesitated to have thus insulted a public servant; but as, perhaps, Canon Liddon has long since regretted having done so, I shall say no more than that, in the whole course of my thirty-five years' service, I have never received from any Foreign Secretary or Ambassador the slightest hint to report otherwise than according to fact, and have always stated the plain truth, and the whole truth, to the best of my ability.

Canon Liddon remarks that "Mr. Holmes characterizes our statement as astounding." I did so because it was "astounding" that these gentlemen could have believed that it was reserved for them alone to discover, on a great European highway, what could not have possibly occurred without the widest publicity; astounding from the credulity displayed; astounding from the tenacity with which these cruelties have been insisted on, and almost irresistible evidence to the contrary disregarded, when one would have imagined that charitably-minded clergymen would have been only too glad to be convinced, for the sake of humanity, that such frightful atrocities as those they thought they had witnessed had not in reality occurred; and, lastly, I now say astounding that gentlemen should have thought it necessary to support their assertions by endeavouring to weaken evidence, given with no malevolent animus, but simply to establish the truth, by sneers and insult.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. R. HOLMES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 137.

M. de Vienne to Consul Holmes.

Bosna Serai, le 19 Novembre, 1876.

Cher et Honoré Collègue,

VOUS voulez bien me demander si, dans le cours d'excursions entreprises en Bosnie pendant ces douze derniers mois et tout récemment encore, j'ai vu, ainsi que l'ont rapporté deux voyageurs Anglais, des hommes empalés et si j'ai eu connaissance de telles atrocités.

Non, je n'ai jamais vu d'homme empalé, soit en longeant la Save, soit en suivant la frontière de la Drine ou la route de Constantinople que les Serbes ont occupée en plusieurs points. Mon assertion ne peut, sans doute, démentir le fait raconté par des voyageurs de très bonne foi, et d'autres raisons me permettent de discuter leur témoignage.

Le premier de ces arguments est qu'aucun de nos collègues n'a jusqu'ici entendu parler de rien de semblable. J'ajouterai que les riverains de la Save, sujets Autrichiens de race Slave, sont en mesure de vérifier l'allégation des voyageurs et qu'ils ne l'ont pas confirmée. C'est, en effet me dites-vous, en suivant la Save en bateau à vapeur que vos

compatriotes auraient vu, sur la rive Turque, le supplicié, et j'admets difficilement que la population hostile à la Turquie de la rive opposée devant laquelle ces actes de cruauté auraient été commis, ne les signalât pas de l'indignation.

Je cherche donc une explication plausible et je crois l'avoir trouvée. Vous avez dû voir comme moi dans la campagne des poteaux assez élevés, au sommet desquels une plateforme occupée par un paysan sert de poste d'observation. Le cultivateur garde ainsi tout un champ de maïs pour le défendre contre les ravages des bestiaux paissant ici à l'aventure. Souvent les poteaux sont simplement entaillés sur les côtés de sorte que le gardien monte facilement au sommet en se retenant avec les bras. Je me rappelle avoir vu un homme dans cette position et mon compagnon de promenade me dit, "Voilà un empalé." C'était bien avant que les récits des voyageurs eussent motivé des investigations.

Je suppose donc que des voyageurs dont l'imagination était surexcitée ont pris des observatoires aussi primitifs, et servant actuellement à surveiller la campagne, pour des instruments de supplice. Je ne contredis ni n'affirme, et je ne puis que vous soumettre cette explication.

Croyez, &c.
(Signé) CH. DE VIENNE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 137.

M. Théodorovic to Consul Holmes.

Serajevo, le 14 Décembre, 1876.

A LA suite de votre démarche j'ai demandé à M. l'Evêque Strossmayer par écrit, s'il était vrai qu'il avait raconté à MM. Liddon et Mac Coll que sur la rive droite de la Save des personnes de l'un et de l'autre sexe, et entre autres une femme enceinte, avaient été empalées vivantes. Je suis dans le cas maintenant de vous transmettre, M. le Consul et cher collègue, ci-adjointe la traduction en Français de la réponse de M. l'Evêque Strossmayer, écrite en langue Croate.

J'observe en même temps qu'au sujet d'une cruauté pareille je n'ai pu obtenir des informations authentiques ni par le moyen des Vice-Consulats de Livno, Brcha, et de Banialuka, situés sur les frontières de la Bosnie et dépendant de ce Consulat-Général, ni d'autre part.

Je saisis, &c.
(Signé) THEODOROVIC.

Inclosure 4 in No. 137.

Bishop Strossmayer to M. Théodorovic.

Diakovar, le 28 Novembre, 1876.

(Extrait.)

VOICI la réponse à votre lettre :—

Ce que j'ai raconté à cet honorable Anglais je l'ai entendu de témoins complétement dignes de foi, parmi lesquels se trouvent des prêtres de mon diocèse résidant sur les bords de la Save et qui me réfèrent des horreurs inouïes dont ils ont été les témoins oculaires. Il n'y a pas là, il est vrai, de quoi s'étonner. Des passions s'étant déchaînées, de nos jours, en Bosnie, qui produisent des horreurs chez les nations civilisées, comment n'auraient-elles point cet effet dans un pays sauvage et complétement barbare jusqu'à nos jours?

Vous me pardonnerez, M. le Consul-Général, une observation que je vais faire. Dans nos contrées l'opinion générale est que MM. les Consuls-Généraux suivent une direction donnée, à laquelle ils accommodent tout ce qu'ils voient et tout ce qu'ils ne voient pas.

C'est de là que provient—c'est ainsi qu'on le pense chez nous—l'admission de l'exceptionnel dans les jugements rendus sur ces évènements, et conformes plutôt aux idées de l'élément prédominant. Je ne sais pas combien de vrai il y a dans ces assertions; mais je remarque, non sans étonnement, que c'est précisément vous et le Consul Britannique qui ont cru nécessaire de me provoquer à cette réponse. En outre j'ai été frappé par la question que vous me faites dans votre lettre, à savoir si j'avais vu ce que MM. les Anglais racontent, de mes propres yeux? Comme s'il appartenait à moi de visiter

les bords de la Save et de surveiller ce qui s'y passe, ou bien comme s'il ne pût être vrai que ce que nous voyons de nos propres yeux!

M. le Consul-Général, il ne s'agit point, à mon avis, de savoir si dans l'espèce tel ou autre a été le cours d'un évènement que les gens nous rapportent; mais il s'agit d'un grand principe qui décide, d'un seul coup, de toute la question, à savoir, s'il est possible ou non que sous le régime du Coran le peuple Chrétien puisse exister sans oppression ni martyre.

No. 138.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 1 A.)
My Lord,

Vienna, January 2, 1877.

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram of yesterday acquainting me with the operative clause of an Act, which General Ignatiew had proposed should be signed by the Plenipotentiaries of the six Powers who attended the preliminary conference at Constantinople, and informing me that Lord Salisbury had requested to be furnished with authority to sign it, provided that the Austrian Plenipotentiary is authorised to do so, I immediately communicated with Count Andrassy on the subject. His Excellency did not clearly understand the object of the proposed Act, as it merely declares what had been already notified to the Porte, and he said he could not express a positive opinion as to the expediency of signing it, having not yet received any report from Count Zichy with respect to it. It appeared to him, however, that it might be signed without danger or inconvenience if a clause were added after the word "peace" stating that "it is, however, understood that it shall be open to the Porte to propose modifications in details and as to the manner of carrying out the views of the Powers."

A clause of this kind, he said, seemed to be necessary to show that the proposals made to the Porte shall be subject to discussion, as the Conference would otherwise be a useless formality.

After he has received a report on the subject from Count Zichy, he will instruct him to communicate with Lord Salisbury in order that they may arrange, as far as their respective instructions may point out, to adopt a common course with respect to it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 139.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 14.)
My Lord,

Vienna, January 5, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that the Roumanian Agent told me to-day, that since my conversation with him on the 3rd instant, reported in my Despatch No. 7, Confidential, he has received instructions to acquaint Count Andrassy with the intention of his Government, to resent the explanation given by the Porte of certain articles in the Turkish Constitution, by withholding the tribute, and that he has been also instructed to ask my opinion on the subject.

I declined expressing an opinion, which might be represented to be that of Her Majesty's Government, as to how far the circumstances would justify the Government of Prince Charles in adopting such a measure, but I said it might be presumed that your Lordship would consider the Porte had acted imprudently by adding a new question of an irritating nature to those with which it had already to deal. I promised, however, at the request of M. Balatchano to communicate to your Lordship the desire of his Government to learn whether they would receive the moral support of Her Majesty's Government in maintaining that they are entitled to withhold the payment of the tribute if the Porte persists in endeavouring to change the political position, which the Principalities have possessed *ab antiquo*, and which was secured to them by the Treaty of Paris.

I asked whether any answer had been given to the overture of Austria respecting the neutrality of Roumania referred to in my despatch No. 7, and he said he had been instructed to inform Count Andrassy that his Government hoped they would be permitted to remain neutral, and that they might trust to receiving the support of Austria for the maintenance of the territorial integrity and the political position of their country.

Under present circumstances, however, should war take place between Russia and

Turkey, M. Balatchano added that, in his opinion, the country would be unanimous in making common cause with Russia, in consequence of the affront which the Porte has offered to the nation and its Prince, by including them among the Ottomans of the Turkish Empire.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 140.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 16.) *Vienna, January 4, 1877.*
My Lord,

WITH reference to a telegram addressed to your Lordship by Sir Augustus Paget on the 3rd instant, on the subject of a suggestion that in the event of the Conference at Constantinople terminating unsatisfactorily the Ambassadors should not separate but resume their sittings in an Italian town, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the Italian Ambassador here has made a similar suggestion, but I am told that Count Andrassy has expressed no opinion upon it, as he does not consider the question to require an immediate decision.

It is also believed here that in the event of General Ignatiew retiring from Constantinople, he will be accompanied by all the members of his Embassy, and that the Russian Government will cease to have a Diplomatic Representative at the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 141.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 17. Confidential.) *Vienna, January 8, 1877.*
My Lord,

M. MARINOVITCH, who is passing through here on his way to Belgrade, called upon me to-day, and I gathered from his conversation that he has decided on forming a Ministry on his return to Servia.

He said, however, that he would only accept office on his own conditions, and on satisfying himself that he would be supported in his efforts to restore peace and to pursue a policy by which the country may be enabled to recover from the disasters from which it is suffering in consequence of the war.

I asked whether he thought it probable that Russia, in the event of hostilities with Turkey, intended to use Servia as a base for military operations, and he assured me that nothing had been said to him before he left St. Petersburgh with respect to such an eventuality, and that, judging from the language uniformly held to him, the Emperor and the Government appeared to be principally occupied in endeavouring to secure the maintenance of peace, being evidently desirous, in as far as could be done with honour, to retire from the position created by the Emperor's speech at Moscow, and the subsequent mobilization of the army, incidents which are now sincerely regretted.

M. Marinovitch will spend a day at Perth on his way to Belgrade, in the hope of communicating with Count Andrassy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 142.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 18.) *Vienna, January 8, 1877.*
My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch to Sir Augustus Paget, No. 3 of the 4th instant, on the subject of the proposal that in the event of the Conference at Constantinople breaking up, the Plenipotentiaries of the Six Powers should resume their deliberations at some place out of the Turkish dominions, I have acquainted Baron

Orczy, confidentially, with the reasons which your Lordship has expressed to General Menabrea for personally disapproving of such a course, and I had ventured previously, on the question being first mentioned to me here, to express a personal opinion, that a prolonged absence of Lord Salisbury from England would probably be objected to, as inconvenient to the public service.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 143.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 19.)
My Lord, *Vienna, January 4, 1877.*

I UNDERSTAND that General Tchernaieff, who had come here with the intention of returning to Servia, has received orders by telegraph not to do so. He will probably, therefore, go to Nice with his family.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 144.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 4. Political. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Bucharest, January 5, 1877.*

IT would appear that the wording of the protest forwarded by this Government to Constantinople is even more vehement than I had been led to anticipate would be the case.

After drawing up an historical memorandum of the relations of the Ottoman Empire to Wallachia and Moldavia, and a recapitulation of the guarantees under which this country came into existence, the protest concludes with the words, "the violation of our rights necessitates the rupture of our ties (liens) with the Sublime Porte."

Nothing is said with respect to the tribute, and it is to be hoped that more prudent counsels will prevail before the latter becomes due. The unwisdom of the present action of the Roumanian Government cannot fail to be apparent to your Lordship.

This Government had no official knowledge of a Turkish Constitution until General Ghika, owing to instructions from Bucharest, solicited explanations at the hands of Safvet Pasha, the Turkish Constitution has not been officially communicated to the agent at Constantinople, or forwarded to this Government.

Embarge is taken at the terms "privileged provinces," but no examination has been made of the original text and its exact interpretation.

In Turkish official documents Arabic expressions are largely called into requisition. Arabic is one of the richest living languages, and the modes of expression in this instance may have been various; and I am informed that "privileged provinces" is, in all probability, not the precise translation of the text.

The precipitation of the Roumanian Government in this matter is much to be regretted; nothing pressed for an explanation, and the probable result will be, that the Constitution will be communicated to Prince Charles, accompanied by a Vizirial letter, which will be even less palatable than the expressions, at which so much exception has been taken.

Political capital is being made out of the incident of the Cabinet, which, for various reasons, is not in a very solid position; while M. Rosetti, and those who cherish Russian proclivities, will profit by the excitement to endeavour to stir up a Russian current outside the Ministry and the Chamber.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 145.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 5. Political. Confidential.)

Bucharest, January 7, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that M. Sturdza, the Minister of Public Works, has given his resignation, which has been accepted.

For some time M. Sturdza has had differences with his colleagues on general as well as departmental questions, but his final decision was due to a violent speech made by M. Bratiano on the Turco-Roumanian difficulty at the last sitting of the Senate.

M. Sturdza, if not exactly a partizan of a Turkish policy for this country, at all events represented the anti-Russian current in the Cabinet; it was he who was in favour of an uncompromising attitude towards Russia, of the removal of the seat of Government if Russian armies approached Bucharest, and of abstaining from intrigues of any sort.

In fact I can hardly describe M. Sturdza's views better than by saying that he thinks exactly with Prince John Ghika, with whom your Lordship had various conversations in the earlier part of the present winter.

M. Cobresco has been named Minister of Public Works; he is of the "Moldavian fraction" in the Chamber, and brings no additional strength.

The secession of M. Sturdza has given a blow to the Bratiano Cabinet which may have important consequences; the Senate also, in its last sitting before the present holidays, gave a rebuff to the Ministry, which may lead to their resignation.

The Ministers asked the Senate to approve their action in protesting energetically to the Porte; but, after two hours' debate, the Senate, omitting the word "energetically," passed on to the order of the day.

M. Bratiano spoke in a most excited and impolitic tone, and after much menace and boasting declared that this Government would never be satisfied until the Porte retracted the expressions "privileged provinces" and "Ottoman subjects" in respect of Roumania, in as solemn a manner as the Constitution has been promulgated.

I should add, that the protestation of the Roumanian Government had been forwarded before the above incident in the Senate, so that the moderation of the latter has had no practical effect.

The Ministers consider that they have received a decided check in the Senate, and their own organ, the "Romanulu," hints at a possible change.

The present crisis may lead to various results; after the holidays M. Bratiano may try to obtain a distinct vote of confidence from the Senate, or he may resign.

In the latter case, M. Kostaki (Epurianu) would probably be called upon to form a Cabinet; in the first instance he would endeavour to get M. Bratiano to join him, with M. Kiriac, the present Minister of Public Worship, and perhaps M. Sturdza;—with such a combination M. Kostaki would have less difficulty with the Chamber, as he would command the votes of a considerable portion of M. Bratiano's following.

Should M. Bratiano refuse office, M. Kostaki would endeavour to appeal to the common sense of the country: complete disarmament, amicable relations with the Porte, liquidation of liabilities, economical reforms, and general abstinence from meddling with higher questions of European and Eastern politics.

Should any of the combinations under M. Kostaki come into existence, it is of the greatest importance that the Porte should not send a prompt and tart reply to the Roumanian protest.

A new Government would not be responsible for the protest, and a sharp reply from Constantinople would put weapons into the hands of M. Kostaki's adversaries, who would cry out that, while Ministers were talking of disarmament, reforms, economies, &c., the Porte is trampling on Roumanian rights, and adding insult into the bargain. Under these circumstances I ventured to forward to Sir Henry Elliot a telegram, the substance of which I also had the honour to communicate to your Lordship, to move the Porte to delay sending an immediate answer to the Roumanian protest.

Another chain of contingencies is also not by any means without the range of possibility.

It is believed by many that Prince Charles and M. Bratiano are completely agreed, and are only waiting for an unsatisfactory and hostile reply from the Porte to proclaim the independence of Roumania, and the intrigues on this head are extremely curious.

The Prince desires his independence. He has never ceased dreaming on this subject since his first arrival in these Principalities. He thinks he would have the army with him, that he might get rid of the "reds," MM. Bratiano, Rosetti, &c., whom he detests, and perhaps remodel the constitution in a more absolute sense. M. Bratiano, who has Russian and anti-Turkish sympathies, thinks that by giving way to the Prince, whom he secretly hates, he may push the country into the arms of Russia.

M. Rosetti, the President of the Chamber, who is in correspondence with all the secret societies in Europe, and who firmly believes that a red democracy is imminent in Russia, imagines that by playing into M. Bratiano's Russian sympathies this country will be committed to the Slave-Democratic Republican movement, which he conceives to be in a process of incubation.

Your Lordship will perceive that a precipitate answer from the Porte might at the present moment hasten events, and cause an action on the part of Prince Charles and the intriguers by whom he is surrounded. Political phases in the East change so rapidly from day to day that a delay on the part of the Porte in this matter might make it impossible for any of the above intrigues to bear fruit, and consequently postpone or defeat demonstrations which could not but add fresh elements of difficulty to the Eastern Question.

I imagine that I am not in error in supposing that Her Majesty's Government would deprecate any action in the direction of independence on the part of Roumania.

Independence voluntarily conceded by the Porte some months since might have been a politic stroke; but snatched in an illegitimate manner, and under the shadow of Russian bayonets on the Pruth, would only furnish a further cause of irritation to the susceptibility of the Porte, which is already suffering severe trials on that head; while if the latter be drawn into a war, additional advantages would accrue to the enemy.

Under any circumstances it appears to me that something is to be gained by retarding the response from Constantinople.

Should M. Kostaki come into power, his embarrassments would be diminished. On the other hand, an ill-advised and, to Roumania, a disastrous step may be postponed, if not suffer absolute prostration.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 146.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 9.)

St. Petersburgh, January 7, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith, as published in the "Journal de St. Pétersbourg," an article from the "Golos" on the policy to be pursued by Russia in case of the failure of the Constantinople Conference.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure in No. 146.

Extract from the "Journal de St. Pétersbourg" of December 25, 1876. January 6, 1877.

LES JOURNAUX RUSSES.—Que restera-t-il à faire à la Russie en cas d'un refus définitif de la Porte d'accepter les exigences de la Conférence? — se demande la "Voix," dans un de ses articles de fond. La Porte, comme il faillait du reste s'y attendre, a répondu au projet formulé par les Délégués des Puissances par un contre-projet qui réduit à néant le travail qui a coûté une année à l'Europe. Dans ces circonstances toute porte à croire que les Délégués quitteront Constantinople; mais on se demande si le départ des Plénipotentiaires, dont la mission spéciale peut être considérée comme accomplie à la clôture de la Conférence, serait une mesure suffisante d'intimidation vis-à-vis de la Porte. Ne pourrait-elle pas garder la conviction que, malgré l'accord des Puissances à réclamer d'elle des garanties, son refus ne lui fait courir aucun risque et ne pourrait-elle pas admettre que dans le cas d'une collision elle trouverait un appui, sinon des alliés, parmi ceux qui la veille semblaient unanimes à la contraindre de respecter les exigences de l'Europe?

Nous nous trouvons aujourd'hui, dit la "Voix," dans une situation pareille à celle qui suivit la publication de la Note Andrassy et du Memorandum de Berlin; on est

unanime à exiger et l'accord disparaît lorsqu'il s'agit de contraindre; il suffit à la Porte de répondre aux réclamations de l'Europe par son opposition inerte et passive pour paralyser toute action collective.

Si cette fois encore l'Europe, comme malheureusement tout le fait supposer, n'oppose que l'indécision et le silence au refus hautain d'un Cabinet qui s'abrite derrière la volonté d'une foule fanatique et barbare qu'il tâche de présenter à l'Europe comme une puissance devant laquelle il serait tenu de céder, que restera-t-il à faire à la Russie? On ne saurait exiger d'elle de partager la honte que le refus de la Porte fait rejaillir sur toute l'Europe. La Russie s'est acquittée de sa mission de Puissance Chrétienne: le sentiment de sa dignité et la conscience de ses intérêts sauront lui faire trouver la voie à suivre.

Mais quels sont, dit la "Voix" en poursuivant, les vrais intérêts que la Russie doit sauvegarder dans ses rapports avec la Turquie? Depuis que l'Empire Ottoman, affaibli et démoralisé, a abandonné sa politique envahissante, il est devenu pour la Russie un voisin avec lequel on pouvait s'entendre et dont l'existence devenait même une garantie contre certaines éventualités embarrassantes. Cette idée s'est fait jour dans les commencements du règne de l'Empereur Alexandre I et depuis lors elle est restée un des principes traditionnels de la politique Russe.

Lorsqu'en 1829 il ne restait à l'armée Russe, qui s'était avancée jusqu'à Adrianople, qu'à faire un pas pour mettre fin à l'existence de l'Empire Ottoman en Europe, l'Empereur Nicolas décida, dans une séance solennelle du comité des Ministres, qu'il n'était aucunement de l'intérêt de la Russie de détruire cet Etat vermoulu, attendu que tout ce qu'on voudrait créer pour le remplacer présenterait des inconvénients plus graves que le maintien de la domination du Sultan. L'établissement d'un Empire Slave n'était pas possible, vu les dispositions de l'Europe et l'opposition des Grecs; la création d'un Empire Grec aurait, de son côté, rencontré l'hostilité des populations Slaves du Balkan et froissé le sentiment de la Russie; l'organisation de plusieurs Etats indépendants pourrait produire l'anarchie. Le mieux était donc de maintenir la domination des Turcs. Cependant leur séjour en Europe fut subordonné à une condition expresse: celle de gouverner les populations Chrétiennes d'une manière humaine et équitable, d'une manière que ne froissât pas les sentiments Chrétiens de l'Europe. Mais l'expérience a surabondamment prouvé qu'on ne saurait attendre des Turcs l'exécution de cette condition indispensable. En même temps que cette vérité se faisait jour, ce qu'on était convenu jadis d'appeler la question d'Orient changeait d'aspect et se présentait dans des dimensions ignorées avant notre époque.

A l'heure qu'il est l'Empire des Indes et l'Asie Centrale sont entrés dans la sphère de la politique Européenne; les distances ont diminué, les points de contact se sont multipliés et la question d'Orient n'est plus confinée dans les limites de la péninsule des Balkans, mais embrasse une partie immense du globe. Il est incontestable que ce sont précisément les succès de la Russie dans l'Asie Centrale qui ont éveillé l'hostilité et les suspicions du Cabinet de Londres. A tort ou à raison l'Angleterre est convaincue qu'elle est menacée dans ses possessions Indoues, menacée, non pas au point de vue matériel, car la Russie n'a ni intérêt, ni même la possibilité de nuire à l'Angleterre aux Indes, mais menacée dans le prestige qui est le seul soutien de la domination exercée par 60,000 Anglais sur 200,000,000 d'Indous et de Musulmans. Il eût été pourtant si facile de conjurer ce danger: il aurait suffi de prouver aux populations de l'Asie que dans la politique de l'Angleterre et de la Russie il n'existe aucun antagonisme, que le terrain où agissent ces Puissances est assez vaste pour leur permettre à toutes deux d'accomplir leur mission civilisatrice sans se nuire mutuellement et même en s'entr'aidant.

Mais l'orgueil ou les préjugés des Ministres Anglais leur ont fait préférer le conflit, qui tout naturellement a dû éclater à Constantinople. M. Disraeli a commencé par mettre en scène le voyage du Prince de Galles aux Indes avec le but évident d'éblouir les populations Indoues et de faire ressortir aux yeux des Anglais l'importance de leur Empire des Indes. La prise du titre Impérial par Sa Majesté la Reine Victoria a marqué la seconde étape de la voie suivie par le Cabinet de St. James. Enfin l'appui prêté aux Turcs par Lord Beaconsfield est une conséquence dérivant de cette même politique. C'est toujours la même préoccupation de faire valoir aux yeux des Musulmans des Indes que l'Angleterre se considère, suivant l'expression de Lord Palmerston, comme le premier Empire Musulman du monde, et de leur signaler la Russie comme l'ennemi de l'Islam.

Si l'Angleterre avait commencé cette lutte en Asie, elle se serait trouvée isolée en face de la Russie et peut-être les chances n'auraient-elles point été à son avantage. En transportant le débat à Constantinople, l'Angleterre croyait, au contraire, pouvoir

compter tirer parti des traditions et des préjugés d'une certaine partie de l'Europe hostile à la Russie sitôt qu'il s'agit des affaires d'Orient.

En envisageant les choses à ce point de vue, la question d'Orient se présente sous une face nouvelle: la Russie, contiguë au monde Musulman sur une grande partie de ses vastes frontières et comptant parmi ses propres sujets une nombreuse population Musulmane, ne peut naturellement avoir un intérêt à provoquer un conflit avec l'élément Musulman. Il serait parfaitement contraire à ses intérêts de s'engager sous ce rapport dans la voie où voudrait la faire entrer une politique envieuse et égoïste que suivrait l'Angleterre; il serait aussi contraire aux intérêts de l'Europe de la pousser au conflit au nom des intérêts de la Grande Bretagne en Asie. Les Puissances Européennes feraient bien de ne pas perdre de vue que la Russie a aussi son rôle en Europe et que son influence est indispensable à la tranquillité du Continent.

Pour ce qui est de la Turquie, la Russie ne nourrit aucune inimitié à son égard: elle n'exige d'elle que justice et humanité dans ses rapports avec ses sujets Chrétiens, ce qui est dans l'intérêt bien entendu de la Porte, qui, si elle suivait les conseils égoïstes de l'Angleterre, préparerait fatalement sa propre ruine.

Toutes ces considérations devront être sérieusement pesées lorsqu'il s'agira de décider définitivement ce que la Russie fera dans les circonstances présentes. Ne perdons d'ailleurs pas l'espoir—dit la "Voix" en terminant—qu'en Angleterre aussi il se trouvera des hommes sages qui hésiteront à donner leur consentement à une politique de nature à aboutir à une lutte terrible entre deux Puissances qui n'ont qu'à gagner à rester unies et à agir d'un commun accord.

No. 147.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(*Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January* 12.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le* 11 *Janvier*, 1877.

DANS la séance d'aujourd'hui de la Conférence, nous avons proposé l'institution d'une Commission composée en nombre égal de Musulmans et de Chrétiens pour la Bosnie et l'Herzégovine, et nous avons déclaré même que la Sublime Porte est disposée à procéder à la nomination de cette Commission conformément aux bases contenues dans la note du Comte Andrassy en date du 13 Février. Quant à la nomination des valis avec l'assentiment des Puissances, nous avons dit de nouveau les raisons qui ne nous permettent pas d'acquiescer à ce point, et nous avons donné des assurances formelles sur le choix et sur la stabilité de nos Gouverneurs. Les Plénipotentiaires étrangers ont considéré notre proposition et nos considérations comme constatant une divergence d'opinion, et ils n'ont pas continué la discussion.

La prochaine séance est fixée à Lundi.

L'attitude des Représentants des Puissances n'indique point que leurs dispositions précédentes relativement à un départ éventuel aient été modifiées.

No. 148.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 20.) *Foreign Office, January* 12, 1877.

Sir,

HER Majesty's Government approve the steps taken by your Excellency, and the language held by you to Midhat Pasha, upon the subject of Shefket Pasha's case, as reported in your despatch No. 1392 of the 26th ultimo.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 149.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)*

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, January 11, 1877, 3 P.M.*
(Confidential.)

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, I have reason to know that a perfect understanding exists at this moment between the three Emperors in regard to Eastern affairs which renders improbable any isolated action on the part of Austria, and would check any ambitious aspirations of Italy.

Russia makes use of Italy as a check on Austria, while Italy hopes for Russian support for her views of aggrandizement.

Should the Conference break up without result, it is not probable that the three Emperors will accept passively the affront offered to Europe by Turkey, and consequently a combined action may be proposed similar to former Russian proposal.

Isolated action on the part of either Russia or Austria is not likely.

No. 150.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.†—(Received January 12.)

Scutari, January 11, 1877.
(Telegraphic.)

THE Turkish Commander-in-chief informs me that the agitation among Mirdites alluded to in my despatch No. 92 of the 31st ultimo is being increased to a dangerous extent through Russian and Italian instrumentality. His Excellency has news of a projected landing of 500 Italians on the coast between Durazzo and Alessio, and has telegraphed to Constantinople for the naval force on this station to be increased.

He tells me that well-known Montenegrin Chief Marcutoscelu has passed into Mirdite mountains.

No. 151.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.‡—(Received January 12.)

Rome, January 12, 1877.
(Telegraphic.)

THE Italian Government have always thought, as frequently reported, that Russian invasion of Bulgaria would be followed by an Austrian occupation of Bosnia, but they have not fresh data on the subject. I am assured, and believe that there is not any feeling in the country generally on the Trentino question, though there may be among a certain number of individuals in the frontier provinces, but the strictest orders have been given to the Prefects to prevent any acts which might justify complaints by Austria.

The policy of the Italian Government is the maintenance of the existing geographical arrangement, and this is one of the reasons, as I am again informed, why they are in favour of the Conference not breaking up, but removing elsewhere if Turkey refuses terms proposed.

No. 152.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(Telegraphic.) *Berlin, January 12, 1877, 12·5 P.M.*
(Confidential.)

THE language of the German Ambassador at Constantinople does not imply a change of policy on the part of Germany, but the contrary.

German Emperor I am told thinks that the Conference will change policy of Powers, if the Powers do not put a limit to the spirit of concession which animates the Conference, and which the Emperor thinks encourages the resistance of the Porte.

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* Repeated to Embassies.
† Sent to Constantinople.
‡ Repeated to Paris, Constantinople, St. Petersburgh, Vienna, and Berlin.

No. 153.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(Telegraphic.) *Berlin, January 12, 1877.*
(Most Confidential)

COUNT SCHOUVALOFF is perfectly right, there is an intimate understanding between Austria, Germany, and Russia.

Count Andrassy's policy, "privately propping up the Turks," is after all in the interest of Russia, and not in that of Turkey.

No. 154.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12, at night.)

(Telegraphic.) *Buda-Pesth, January 12, 1877, 5 P.M.*

ON my observing to-day that a report is in circulation that the rupture of negotiations at Constantinople will be followed by an Austrian occupation of a part of Bosnia, Count Andrassy said that it was impossible to say what the interests of Austria may eventually render expedient, but if ever she occupied Bosnia, it will not be in consequence of the breaking up of the Conference.

No. 155.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12, at night.)

(Telegraphic.) *Buda-Pesth, January 12, 1877, 6 P.M.*
(Confidential.)

I ACQUAINTED Count Andrassy this morning with the substance of the suggestion made to your Lordship yesterday by an Agent of the Porte, and your answer to it.

His Excellency expressed no opinion as to the expediency of its adoption, but if the Turkish Constitution could be carried out, which he does not believe, it would lead to the dissolution of the Empire.

He considers it, however, a master-stroke of Midhat Pasha, as Russian troops can no longer enter Bulgaria with proclamation of free institutions on the point of their bayonets. As the Porte, therefore, has given more than Russia would offer to Bulgaria, and Servia is crying for peace, there is no longer a decent pretext for war; and Emperor of Russia being earnestly desirous of peace, we may hope will be preserved by the Porte accepting the arrangement on the basis of the late proposals of the Conference as Turkey has already had a diplomatic victory in the moderation of the demands to which Russian pretensions have been reduced.

His Excellency fears, however, that no arrangement will be lasting, for, as the financial difficulties of the Porte will always cause discontent (adventurers?) will easily excite new insurrections.

No. 156.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12, at night.)

(Telegraphic.) *Pesth, January 12, 1877, 9·30 P.M.*
(Most Confidential.)

THE Emperor said to me to-day that nothing could be more satisfactory than the assurances which he receives of the Emperor Alexander's desire to maintain peace, but he finds it difficult to reconcile them with the expensive preparations of the Russian Government for war.

This language, together with that of Count Andrassy, which I report to-day, is inconsistent with understanding which, according to Count Schouvaloff, exists between the Powers.

No. 157.

Consul Skene to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 13, 1877.)

(No. 10. Political.)
Aleppo, December 21, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of my despatch No. 34, reporting to Sir Henry Elliot that all apprehension of further disturbances at Tarsus has been removed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

Inclosure in No. 157.

Consul Skene to Sir H. Elliot.

Aleppo, December 21, 1876.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 32 of the 14th instant, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that the excitement then existing at Tursus has ceased without producing any further results than those I stated in that despatch, and that I have consequently not taken any steps for the security of British subjects in the province of Adana.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

No. 158.

Consul Skene to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 13, 1877.)

(No. 11. Political.)
Aleppo, December 28, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to enclose a copy of my despatch No. 35, reporting to Sir Henry Elliot the unsatisfactory impression produced in this town by the institution of a Chamber of Representatives of all classes of the population of Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

Inclosure in No. 158.

Consul Skene to Sir H. Elliot.

Aleppo, December 28, 1876.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that the telegraphic announcement, arrived here on the 24th instant, that a Chamber of Deputies of all religious denominations would be instituted, has caused considerable excitement among the Mussulman inhabitants of Aleppo, and a corresponding degree of alarm on the part of its Christian population. The coincidence of the feast of Curbam Bairam and Christmas has furnished opportunities for the respective display of public feeling. Sermons have been preached in the Mosques, and prayers offered up, calling for the destruction of the enemies of Islam; and the usual prayer for the Sultan has been omitted on these occasions; while the bishops have warned their congregations to avoid all causes of conflict. The Governor-General has put a stop to such demonstrations, and has had military pickets posted, and patrols marched all over the town, but the state of mind of the people is still far from being satisfactory. When the above-mentioned telegram was officially proclaimed, and saluted by a hundred and one guns, a sullen silence was maintained, and, when an illumination was enjoined by public criers, no response was given excepting in a few cases of functionaries lighting lamps over the doors of their houses. The Addresses, required in the telegram, to convey to the Porte the intelligence of universal jubilation over the change announced in the political institutions of Turkey, have been signed only under pressure by the Turkish authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

No. 159.

Consul Skene to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 13, 1877.)

(No. 12. Political.)
Aleppo, December 28, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of my despatch of this date to Sir Henry Elliot, relative to incipient disturbances in different parts of this Consular District.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

Inclosure in No. 159.

Consul Skene to Sir H. Elliot.

Aleppo, December 28, 1876.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency of its having been reported to me from Caramania, in the Province of Adana, that the soldiers of the Reserve have plundered the shops of the Christians there to the value of about 1,000*l.*

Intelligence has just been received from Edlib, a small town near Aleppo, of a party of Mussulmans having entered the Greek church during divine service, and imitated the voice and gestures of the priest to turn them into ridicule. The service was curtailed, and the congregation dismissed. When the priest was leaving the church, he found the same Mussulmans waiting for him at the door, who beat him with a stick, wounding him severely on the forehead.

A few hours ago some soldiers of the Reserve went through the Christian quarter of Aleppo, loudly cursing the Cross, and calling out to the Christians in the streets that their wives would soon be violated. The police arrested them.

I have little doubt of the Governor-General of Aleppo being able to deal satisfactorily with these two cases in this province, but it does not appear probable, from what I have learnt, that the Governor-General of Adana will acquit himself of his duty equally creditably in the province under his authority.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

No. 160.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 13, 1877.)

(No. 50. Political.)
Beyrout, December 28, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch which I addressed on the 26th instant to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, reporting on the promulgation of an Ottoman Constitution, and a difficulty which has arisen respecting the choice of Deputies for Mount Lebanon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure in No. 160.

Consul-General Eldridge to Sir H. Elliot.

Beyrout, December 26, 1876.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that, on the evening of the 24th instant, the Governors of Mount Lebanon and Beyrout received the official announcement that a Constitutional form of Government had been accorded to Turkey.

This change was yesterday promulgated to the notables of the place, and celebrated by a parade of troops and artillery salutes; but I have not heard that it has produced any great impression on the minds of the people, who are all intent upon the results of the labours of the Conference.

About a fortnight ago the Governor-General of the Lebanon received instructions to invite the Lebanese to send two Deputies to a National Assembly, Parliament, or Convention of some kind, which was not clearly defined, nor were the attributions of the Deputies specified.

The people of the Mountain, chiefly the Christians, saw, or pretended to see, that this measure was contrary to the spirit of the Règlement, and might lead to a loss of their much cherished privileges. In this view they were supported by some of my colleagues, who, I believe, have reported the matter to their Chiefs requesting instructions, although I am informed that it was stated in the instructions sent to Rustem Pasha that the privileges of the Lebanon would not be in any way affected by the simple act of choosing two Deputies.

Without this assurance I could not perceive that the sending of Deputies at the invitation of the Porte would in any way interfere with the liberties or privileges of the Mountain, they being guaranteed by the Great Powers; but that a refusal to do so might be considered an act of insubordination towards the Imperial Government. The majority of the Druses are of my opinion. No decision has been come to on this subject, which, however, is being much discussed, and I begin to fear may lead to a division amongst the inhabitants of the Lebanon, which cannot fail to be prejudicial to their interests.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 161.

Vice-Consul Jago to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 13, 1877.)

(No. 4. Political.)

Damascus, December 27, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith the copy of my despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassador of this day's date, relative to the recent Charter of Reforms and to the state of public affairs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. S. JAGO.

Inclosure in No. 161.

Vice-Consul Jago to Sir H. Elliot.

Damascus, December 27, 1876.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that on the 24th instant a salvo of twenty-one guns from the citadel announced the receipt of a telegram from the Porte reporting the sanction by the Sultan of a Charter of Reforms. A public reading followed, and a general illumination in the evening was ordered.

It was at first supposed that peace had been signed, and under this impression great and general satisfaction was manifested, and runners were sent to the surrounding villages to bear the glad tidings. Later on, however, public criers informing the people that the telegram announced simply reforms and equality of all before the law, changed the feeling of contentment, especially among the non-Moslems, and public opinion is therefore suspended pending the arrival of details.

It is, however, generally believed that the reforms herald the near approach of peace, and the result of the Conference is anxiously awaited by all classes, both Moslems and non-Moslems.

As regards the conduct of public affairs, I regret to say that the pressure put upon the authorities by the present political events seems to have paralyzed the civil administration of the country, and to render it useless for little else than the collection of Redifs and the enforcement of payment of arrears of taxes.

The agricultural interests of the country have received a blow in the exactions of the police and soldiery sent to collect taxes and enforce conscription, and in the flight of many to escape military service, that it will take years to recover. They suffer also from the absolute cessation of credit with the local money-lenders, brought about partly by the practical futility of judicial process, and partly by the penury caused among the peasantry by the exactions of the authorities in men and money. As Syria is entirely dependent upon its agriculture, its present condition cannot well be worse.

In the public offices and Judicial Courts no attention is paid to the dispatch of business, and the corruption, negligence, and confusion therein existing is great.

Although knowing Damascus of old, and the absence of any deterring or controlling influence to remedy the defects of an administration purely Oriental, I confess I was unprepared for what I must needs call the administrative anarchy at present existing.

Formerly the Governor-General exercised a check, greater or smaller, according to the individual, and appeal against rapacity and injustice was not without avail. This now is changed. The present Governor-General, Nashid Pasha, refers every matter which comes before him to the Medjlisses, and takes no heed of the inaction which follows meeting complaints by repeating orders which are seldom obeyed.

Under the circumstances, nothing that can be avoided is submitted to the authorities, and the commercial and financial classes, now existing only in name, are fain to await, as best they can, the advent of better times.

While the action of this Vice-Consulate in defence of the poorer class of British subjects from the extortion and oppression of Government subordinates has of late been less frequently invoked, its influence in overcoming the prevailing inertia in cases, happily few, which admit of no delay, has not been conspicuous; and it has only been by threatening in writing to appeal to your Excellency that the wheels of the most simple administrative routine have been at last put in motion in such cases.

There is an absence at present of serious crime against the person and against property in Damascus, and the preservation of public order seems to be properly looked after; but security beyond its walls is not so marked, and only four days since the public diligence running between this city and Beyrout was fired into by a band close to the city walls, and its driver wounded, the coach escaping by the speed of its horses.

His Excellency the Governor-General returned to Damascus on the 9th instant from the sea-coast.

In conclusion, I venture to express to your Excellency my conviction, from what I observe around me, that although fanaticism undoubtedly exists as ever, and is as easily excitable to evil as it is amenable to proper control, the misery and discouragement among all classes of the population is such that relief at almost any price would be gladly welcomed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. S. JAGO.

No. 162.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 13.)

(No. 1.)
(Decypher.)

Tiflis, January 1, 1877.

My Lord,

CAPTAIN LYALL returned on the 29th; he visited Ozurget, Akalzik, Akallakaki, and Alexandropol.

He was stopped several times. He informs me that the soldiers being quartered in the villages, it was impossible to obtain an accurate account of their numbers, the guns were all kept inside the fortresses; he confirms generally my reports; he also says that, at present, at Alexandropol provisions and firewood are plentiful and cheap, that there is plenty of carriage, and that the roads are in good order for movement of artillery; further, that it is intended, on war being declared, to send Cossacks to seize all the provisions which have been secreted by Turks in their villages; I should, therefore, advise that Turks take steps to prevent this by ordering all forage and provisions to be taken to Erzeroom as soon as possible. He also says that Russians believe that Turkish army will remain, in the event of war, at Kars and Erzeroom without taking offensive, and that they will be able to ravage the country with impunity. The knowledge of this might be useful. A battery of guns went yesterday to Ozurget. An envoy from St. Petersburgh passed through Tiflis for Persia with presents for the Shah. Poti can be approached, I believe, from about six miles to the south by the road running along the shore.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. S. RICKETTS.

No. 163.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 13.)

(No. 24. Very Confidential.)

Paris, January 12, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Duc Decazes recited to me this morning, very confidentially, the substance of telegrams which he had received from Constantinople, respecting the Conference held there yesterday.

He said that it appeared that the reduced proposals of the Powers had never yet been brought officially before the Porte, because General Ignatiew had insisted upon their being accompanied by a note fixing a day for the departure of the Ambassadors if they were not accepted.

General Ignatiew had, however, it seemed, now ceased to insist upon the note, and it had been agreed that Lord Salisbury should, if authorized by Her Majesty's Government to do so, communicate the reduced proposals to the Ottoman Plenipotentiaries at a Conference to be held next Monday (the 15th).

Another difficulty had, however (the Duke went on to say), previously arisen about these proposals. Baron de Werther, the German Ambassador, who had previously said but little in the Conference, had at last read to his fellow Plenipotentiaries a despatch couched in language very harsh ("très désobligeant") towards himself, which he had received from Prince Bismarck. In this despatch the Prince had declared that the reduced terms were so weak and insignificant as to be unworthy of Europe, and that he could not allow the German Empire to be a party to them. Subsequently, however, Prince Bismarck had so far waived his objections as to authorize Baron de Werther not to separate from his colleagues on the question.

It appeared, however, the Duke added, to be almost certainly established as a fact, that the Porte had been encouraged by German Agents in its resistance to the proposals of the Conference.

The Duke went on to say that he was expecting a visit from Prince Hohenlohe, the German Ambassador, who would no doubt speak to him of the position now taken up by Germany in the Conference. But whatever might be the real state of the case, the Duke's own endeavours would, he said, be directed towards preventing anything like a question on the subject arising between France and Germany. With this view, he should be disposed to forestall any explanations from Prince Hohenlohe, by assuming that the encouragement to the Porte to resist, had been the work of unauthorized or unintelligent subordinates, and that the despatch to Baron Werther was intended as a striking manifestation of Prince Bismarck's disavowal and disapproval of their proceedings.

The Duc Decazes then spoke of Odian Effendi's mission to England; and in answer to a question from him, I said that your Lordship had considered that there would be manifest inconvenience in treating in London questions which were at the same time in process of negotiation at Constantinople; and that you had consequently declined entering upon a discussion with this gentleman.

The Duke said that he entirely concurred in the view your Lordship had taken of the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 164.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 13.)

(No. 25. Very Confidential.)

Paris, January 12, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Duc Decazes told me this morning that General Cialdini, the Italian Ambassador here, who had just left him, had been dwelling upon the Italian idea that, if the members of the Conference were obliged to leave Constantinople, they should immediately reassemble at Venice, or some other place out of the Ottoman Empire.

The Duc Decazes did not speak with favour of this idea. He said that the most plausible argument urged in support of it was that, if the formal Conference of the Six Powers were definitely broken up, the direction of the Eastern Question might again be assumed exclusively by what was termed the alliance of three Emperors.

The Duc Decazes proceeded to observe that the alliance of the three Emperors had always had a negative rather than a positive effect. It had to a certain extent been a check upon action, but it had not attempted to take any active steps without the concurrence of the other Powers. Besides which, the understanding between Austria, Germany, and Russia did not, he said, appear at this moment to be so very close and complete as to be dangerous to the rest of Europe.

I asked the Duke what it was supposed that the Representatives of the Great Powers would find to do when they assembled at Venice?

His Excellency answered that the Italians professed not to desire particularly that the Conference should sit in Italy rather than in any other country. He did not, however, pursue the conversation, but merely added laughingly that if, in fact, the Plenipotentiaries established themselves at Venice at this season, probably the first thing they would do would be to catch rheumatism.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 165.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 13.)

(No. 26. Very Confidential.)

Paris, January 12, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Duc Decazes told me, confidentially, this morning that General Cialdini, the Italian Ambassador, had observed to him that it was confidently affirmed that everything was ready in England for an occupation in Egypt, and had asked him what the French Government would do if that country were, in fact, to be occupied by a British force.

The Duke had, he told me, replied that it was quite unnecessary to discuss a contingency of the arrival of which there was no prospect. If any military or naval preparations were really being made in England, they must, he had added, have some other object. He had himself (he had told General Cialdini) been set quite at ease about Egypt by assurances he had received from your Lordship that Her Majesty's Government had no designs whatever upon that country.

The Duke told me further that he had gone on to say to General Cialdini that he should be glad to receive from him equally positive assurances about the intentions of Italy with regard to Tunis.

The General had, he said, answered that the Italians had never thought of taking possession of Tunis.

The Duke observed to me, in conclusion, that, although he had never before obtained any assurance from General Cialdini himself on the subject, he had, in fact, received from Rome a disavowal on the part of the Italian Government of the designs against Tunis which had been attributed to them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 166.

Memorandum.

MUSURUS PASHA and Odian Effendi called upon Lord Beaconsfield by appointment on the 8th of January, in order that Odian Effendi might deliver to the Prime Minister a letter from the Grand Vizier, of which he was the bearer.

After delivering the letter, Odian Effendi proceeded to state that he had been sent to England to explain to the British Government the reasons which had made it impossible for the Porte to accept the proposals made in Conference by the Plenipotentiaries of the Six Powers. Those proposals, he said, might be divided into two parts—the reforms for the disturbed Provinces, and the guarantees for their execution. As regards the reforms themselves, these points to which the Turkish Ministers felt strong objections. For instance, the creation of a Province of Bulgaria (a country which had never hitherto existed), and the limits which it was proposed to assign to it, and which, would include large portions of country mainly inhabited by Greek population, were proposals to which the Porte could not accede. The arrangement, again, that a third only of the revenue derived from the taxes should be paid into the Imperial Exchequer, and that the amount of this quota should be fixed for a term of years, was virtually equivalent to the

constitution of a fresh tributary State. The stipulation that the Governors of the new Province or Provinces of Bulgaria must be Christians offered great difficulties on account of the small number of Christian employés in the service of the Porte properly qualified for such high appointments. It seems, too, a strange proposition when it was remembered that under Midhat Pasha's Government an improved system of administration had been introduced into a portion of this very country, and that the general prosperity of the Province had benefited so much under his direction that the revenue derived from it had been doubled or even trebled without the imposition of fresh taxes. All these points, however, were not incapable of adjustment if discussed with patience and address. It was the question of the guarantees which seemed to offer insuperable difficulties, for the proposals of the Powers appeared to the Porte to involve concessions such as no independent Power could make consistently with self-respect. That the Turkish troops should be withdrawn into the principal towns, leaving the police of the country to the care of a foreign gendarmerie, and that the Commission of foreigners should be instituted, which should exercise or have power to exercise all the principal functions of Government (Odian Effendi here enumerated the various powers with which it was proposed that the Commission should be invested): these were stipulations which it would be not merely humiliating, but suicidal, for the Sultan to agree to. It would be better that the Province or Provinces should be taken from Turkey entirely, than that they should remain nominally subject to the Sultan's rule, but under conditions which implied an incapacity to govern them, and which must ruin his prestige and authority with his other subjects. Odian Effendi continued that he was himself a Christian and an Armenian, that he knew well the feeling that was prevalent in the various parts of the Empire; that the prospect of exceptional advantages being granted to the Slav Provinces was exciting a feeling of jealousy and dissatisfaction elsewhere; that the Greeks were already clamouring for similar privileges; that his own fellow-countrymen were being roused to make the same claim, but that nowhere throughout the Ottoman dominions was there any feeling but one of opposition to the guarantees which the Powers sought to exact. The only exception, perhaps, was that of the Bulgarians themselves, who, he ventured to say, were, of all the Sultan's subjects, nearly the least informed and the most devoid of political capacity. Odian Effendi went on to speak of the Constitution which had recently been proclaimed for the whole Turkish Empire, of the security which it would offer for the real fulfilment of the promises made by the Porte to its subjects (which, he admitted, had in many respects been heretofore very imperfectly carried out), and, he added, that the personal character both of the Sultan and of the present Grand Vizier offered in themselves a guarantee that the new institutions would be thoroughly and conscientiously carried into execution.

Lord Beaconsfield replied that as Odian Effendi was a bearer to him of a letter from the Grand Vizier, he thought it would be discourteous to refuse the honour of receiving the Effendi, but that Lord Beaconsfield could not in any way enter into negotiations respecting the matters referred to in the Conference. It is impossible to negotiate in two places at the same time; the negotiations now were conducted at Constantinople, not at London, on the part of Her Majesty's Government by Lord Salisbury, who possessed their entire confidence. Lord Beaconsfield would, however, take this opportunity of saying that no one wished more than he did that Turkey should maintain her place in the European system; that she should enjoy internal and external tranquillity, and have an opportunity of placing her affairs, and especially her finances, on a reputable footing. As a friend and well-wisher of Turkey, he felt convinced that her first object should be to secure an interval of peace. She had a brave army, but it was impossible to suppose that in a contest with Russia, the latter Power should not, in the end, come off victorious. The struggle might last for more than one campaign, but the ultimate result could scarcely be doubtful. On the other hand, by accepting the conditions proposed to her, Turkey would gain a respite probably of some years, during which the Sultan would have time to reform his administration, to conciliate his subjects, and by these measures to regain the sympathy of England and the rest of Europe, which, as Odian Effendi must be aware, had been alienated by recent deplorable events. Lord Beaconsfield believed that the proposals of the Conference had undergone considerable modifications, and that as now presented to the Porte, they certainly contained nothing which might not honourably be accepted. In the interest of Turkey herself principally, though also in that of Europe in general, he strongly advised the Porte not to reject them.

Odian Effendi said that he would at once report by telegraph to his Government the substance of the Prime Minister's observations. He had not, however, as yet heard from Constantinople that any modifications had been made in the proposals presented by the Plenipotentiaries, and he must repeat that in their original shape it was impossible

for the Porte to accept them. That even supposing Midhat Pasha should make the great sacrifice of agreeing to such an arrangement, a step which must inevitably lead to his fall, the attempt to carry it out would ruin the Sultan and the Ministers who might assist him in the task. They would not be able to stand against the force of public opinion. Odian Effendi went on to say that he saw no occasion for further guarantees than what the Powers had ready to their hand. They had Consuls whose duty and practice it was to report on the state of affairs in the districts where they resided, and to notify any abuses or shortcomings in the administration. They had Ambassadors to represent these matters to the central Government. If the present Consuls were not considered equal to the task, the Porte made no objection to the appointment of others better qualified. Why should not the Constitution just granted be embodied in a Protocol and placed under an European guarantee, thus giving to the Powers the right to interfere on behalf of any portion of the Sultan's subjects, who might hereafter suffer from misgovernment. Odian Effendi mentioned that the special Constitution granted to the districts of the Lebanon was secured by no other guarantee but a Protocol of this nature, and that it had never been alleged that the Porte had failed to fulfil its engagements in that respect. In conclusion, Odian Effendi said that he knew that recent events had unhappily alienated from Turkey the sympathy and goodwill of England, which she had enjoyed in former years, but that his Government still relied on the English love of equity. When it was considered that after being victorious in a war unjustly and treacherously waged against them, they had been called upon to give such terms to their opponents as might have been exacted if Turkey had been the vanquished and not the successful party; that they had declared themselves ready to agree to these hard conditions, and had only broken off on the ground that they were called upon to submit to stipulations and restrictions in regard to their own revolted subjects such as they felt were incompatible with their existence as an independent Government, he felt convinced that the sympathy of impartial persons would not be with the Power which took up arms to enforce upon them such concessions.

To this Lord Beaconsfield only replied that he would still hope that a satisfactory settlement might result from the deliberations of the Conference.

Foreign Office, January 13, 1877.

No. 167.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic) *Foreign Office, January* 13, 1877, 7·34 P.M.

HER Majesty's Government approve the language held by your Excellency at your interview with the Sultan, as reported in your telegram of the 11th instant.

No. 168.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 22.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 13, 1877.

I HAVE to inform your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government approve the language which you held at your audience of the Sultan on the 10th instant, as reported in your telegram of the 11th instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 169.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 15, *night.)*

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Pesth, January* 13, 1877, 5 P.M.

THE Minister for Foreign Affairs expressed surprise to-day that the Grand Vizier could think of giving the Powers a right to watch over the execution of the new Constitution, as Russia might thus find frequent opportunities of interfering in the affairs of the Empire, and raising questions dangerous to its stability.

He spoke hopefully of Monday's Conference, and said that an effort would be made meanwhile through a private source to influence decision of Sultan.

No. 170.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 14, morning.)

(Telegraphic.) *Pesth, January 13, 1877, 10·20 P.M.*
(Confidential.)

BEFORE receiving Lord A. Loftus' telegram of yesterday I said to Count Andrassy that the Russians are alleged to pretend to have an understanding with Austria, and he answered that the report is like their sending him a telegram stating that England and all the other Powers had agreed to sign the Protocol prepared by General Ignatiew, and that the assent of Austria alone was wanting.

I have since said to him that it is now rumoured that Russia, instead of invading Turkey if the Conference fails, will renew her proposals for a joint occupation of Northern Provinces by herself and Austria. To this His Excellency replied she had done this once and was not likely to do so again.

I can only report observations made by his Excellency in private conversations, and (? leave) your Lordship to form your own opinion of them.

No. 171.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 14, morning.)

(Telegraphic.) *Pesth, January 13, 1877, 11·15 P.M.*
(Most Confidential.)

SINCE my telegram of this afternoon Count Andrassy tells me that news just received from Constantinople is not satisfactory, as he finds the original proposals to the Porte have been less modified than he understood them to be, and that so much has been left that there is little probability of their being accepted.

I had some hesitation in referring to alleged declaration of the German Representative in the Conference, but whatever it may have been his Excellency said is had surprised him.

No. 172.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.[a]—(Received January 14.)

Rome, January 14, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs has also received information of certain agitation among Mirdites, but (repudiates ?) the idea that Italy has anything to do with it. His Excellency had not heard of projected landing of Italians, but will nevertheless have orders sent to prevent any embarkation from coast of Italy. He suggests that as Mirdites are Catholics, priests may perhaps be implicated.

With reference to part of Lord A. Loftus's telegram of 12th instant, I do not believe Italian Government entertain any views of territorial aggrandizement.

Minister for Foreign Affairs is evidently much annoyed and surprised at General Menabrea's communication to your Lordship, and does not know on what information it was founded.

No. 173.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 15.)

(No. 1. Political.) *Bucharest, January 2, 1877.*

My Lord,

SO soon as the text of the Turkish Constitution became known to this Government, and that there was an article to the effect that, in the "privileged provinces," the head of the Government receives his investiture from the Sultan, and other articles treating of the Turkish Empire as a whole, all the subjects of which are to be termed "Ottoman subjects," &c., the Roumanian Agent was instructed to ask the meaning of the words

[a] Repeated to Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Constantinople, and St. Petersburgh.

"privileged provinces," and whether it was intended to infer that Roumanians are Ottoman subjects.

The reply arrived yesterday. Safvet Pasha stated to General Ghika, the Roumanian Agent at Constantinople, that the Porte, by "privileged provinces," so designated the united Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, Servia and Egypt.

A sitting of the Chamber took place to-day, from which the public was excluded.

The greatest indignation and unanimity prevailed, and M. Bratiano announced that a strongly worded protest would be forwarded to the Porte, and that if satisfactory explanations were not afforded, the Government of Prince Charles would take what measures seemed best suited to protect the national dignity of these Principalities, and perhaps threaten that the tribute due next month would not be paid.

I had a lengthened conversation with Prince Charles on the subject late this afternoon.

His Highness informed me that a few days since his Government had decided to send the reserves to their homes, and, further, to reduce the regular army, with a view to easing the financial difficulties of the country; but, under the present circumstances, the reserves could not be dismissed or the army reduced.

His Highness also told me that a copy of the protest would be delivered to each of the representatives of the Guaranteeing Powers at the Conference; that the protest would take up historical grounds, showing that the inhabitants of this country had never been deemed Ottoman subjects; that it had been specially stipulated that no Turk could settle in, or even enter, these Principalities; that the Treaty of Paris and other European Conventions had never termed or treated the Roumanians as Ottoman subjects, &c., or designated this country as a "privileged province."

I suggested to the Prince that it would have been more regular to have transmitted the copies of the protest to the permanent Ambassadors accredited to the Sublime Porte, and that copies should be communicated to the various Governments.

As I before have had the honour to mention to your Lordship, the feeling against this step on the part of the Porte is unanimous in the whole country.

Whatever may be the political differences and passions of the Roumanians, and party feeling is now extremely violent, there is but one opinion on the subject.

Roumania is not powerful either for good or for evil in the actual state of the Eastern difficulty, but if there was a Turkish party in the country before, it may safely be said that, at the present moment, it has no existence.

It may be doubted whether this Government is well advised in refusing the tribute or taking other measures, and it is to be hoped that M. Jonesco may not fall into the error of the bombastic tone which was so conspicuous in the contents of the "Green Book," which I had the honour to forward to your Lordship; but the excitement is so great that the country would endorse any note which was addressed to the Porte on the above subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 174.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 15.)

(No. 2.)
(Decypher.)

Tiflis, January 3, 1877.

My Lord,

SIX hundred Cossacks left Tiflis to-day for Erievan; three battalions of 41st division, or 1,920 men left also for Gori, from thence I think they will go to Akalzik; two batteries are expected from Russia. I have counted several battalions on their marching out of Tiflis, and find they number 160 men to each company, or 640 per battalion, or about 10,200 per division; this is worthy of note. At Tiflis there are, at present, ten batteries. Total reserve arrived up to date is 38,000. Please tell Captain Clarke of intelligence. Department not to write interpretation by post. All letters are opened. He risks being compromised. The publication of the Constitution by the Porte has been a sore blow to the Russian Government. They dread the effect likely to be produced by the spreading of liberal opinions among their own subjects.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. T. RICKETTS.

No. 175.

Vice-Consul St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 15.)

(No. 1. Political.)
Jassy, January 0, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to an article published by the "Pester Lloyd," which re-appeared in the "Daily News" of the 2nd instant, stating that, in the Moldavian district of Vaslin, hundreds of Jewish families, having been turned out of house and home, were dying from hunger and cold, I am glad to be able to report that such is far from being the case, and that the statement in question has been greatly exaggerated.

From inquiries I have made of my Austrian colleague, to whom complaints have been addressed on the subject, as well as of some of the leading Jews at Jassy, it appears that, in the above-named district, the 8th Article of the Liquor Law, by which foreigners are restricted from keeping public-houses in the rural districts, has been rigidly enforced.

In every case where the delinquent was found to be of the Jewish persuasion a fine was imposed, which, not having been paid, was followed by sequestration of all his goods, and, in several instances, of summary ejection from the commune.

My Austrian colleague informs me that the Prefect's orders had been carried out with great brutality, and that the proceedings of the authorities, being contrary to the stipulations of the Convention lately concluded with Austria, had by him been submitted to his Government.

I now hear that the Austrian Consul-General at Bucharest has received instructions to inquire into the matter, and that a few days since a Roumanian Government official had been sent from Bucharest to investigate the affair.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. ST. JOHN.

No. 176.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 15.)

(No. 17. Secret.)
Berlin, January 8, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAD the honour to receive this day a telegram from the Marquis of Salisbury, asking me, "confidentially, whether I could give his Lordship any information about Prince Bismarck's change of policy, and the intention of it, his Highness having directed the German Ambassador to hold energetic language, and refuse his consent to any demands less stringent than those addressed to Turkey in the first instance. The change," Lord Salisbury observes, "excites great surprise, because for more than a year he has held language that Germany had no special interest in the matter."

I was in a position to be able to reply at once that—

"The language of the German Ambassador did not imply any change of policy on the part of Prince Bismarck, but that his Highness wishes to be made acquainted with the proposed demands, measures, or concessions before giving his sanction to them."

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 177.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 15.)

(No. 23. Most Confidential.)
Berlin, January 11, 1877.

My Lord,

YOUR Lordship's telegram, Most Confidential, of to-day has just reached me, respecting Count Schouvaloff's assurance that there is an intimate understanding between Austria, Germany, and Russia.

Count Schouvaloff is perfectly right, and even though Count Andrassy occasionally boasts of "privately propping up the Turks," his policy has after all been all along in the interest of Russia, and not in that of Turkey.

Russia and Germany are natural allies, and Count Andrassy's tenure of office depends on their good will and support, as does indeed the very existence of the Austrian Empire.

The rejection of the Berlin Memorandum showed the Northern Powers the necessity of consulting England, and of soliciting the support of Her Majesty's Government before settling the Turkish question among themselves.

The understanding between them became in consequence more intimate for the purpose of obtaining if possible by joint action the co-operation of England, in addition to that of France and Italy they had already secured, because they apprehended that the isolation of England might encourage the tendency of the Porte to resistance or inaction, and hasten on the events in the East; the Berlin Memorandum was intended to postpone, and thereby necessitate on their part, a more energetic action in Turkey, which they were unwilling to adopt without the support of Her Majesty's Government.

The three Emperors then agreed to subordinate the policy laid down in the Berlin Memorandum and their minor differences of opinion in regard to details and the *modus operandi* to the initiative of England, and to encourage, promote, and follow the lead of England as long as possible.

If that should ever fail them, the three Powers have come to an intimate understanding among each other to coerce Turkey by military occupations, which would be carried out by Austria and Russia and supported by Germany.

The Northern Powers have also agreed that it would be conducive to their own future advantage if England could be gradually induced to transfer her interests and the weight of her influence from European Turkey to Egypt and Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 178.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 15.)

(No. 24. Most Confidential.)
Berlin, January 11, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE just received your Lordship's telegram of to-day, respecting the statement of the German Ambassador at Constantinople to the Marquis of Salisbury, that he has received renewed orders to declare formally that he will not suffer any abatement of the proposals already made.

In previous reports I have had occasion to explain that the language of Baron Werther did not imply any change of policy on the part of Prince Bismarck, but that his Highness wished to be made acquainted with the new proposals, before giving his sanction to them.

I now learn that it was the Emperor William who desired Prince Bismarck to instruct his Ambassador not to suffer any abatement of the proposals or sanction a change of policy without previous reference to Berlin, because his Majesty is under an impression that the Conference will change the policy of the Powers, if the Powers do not put a limit to the spirit of concession which animates the Conference, and which his Majesty persists in thinking tends to encourage the resistance of the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 179.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 15.)

(No. 21.)
Vienna, January 10, 1877.

Sir,

I AM informed by Mr. Monson that a Committee at Cambridge, who have been forwarding to Cettigné contributions for the Herzegovinian refugees, lately stated that their last remittance not being larger might be accounted for by reports which had reached England of Montenegrin cruelties in the field, and they offered at the same time to make public any denial which might be sent to them of the reports.

The Montenegrin Government have consequently communicated to the Committee the substance of their correspondence on this subject with Mr. Monson, who has

therefore requested me to give the above explanation to your Lordship in case any part of the correspondence should be published in the English newspapers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 180.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 15.)

(No. 25. Confidential.) *Vienna, January 11, 1877.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, respecting an alleged intention of the Austro-Hungarian Government to occupy a part of Bosnia, in the event of the Conference at Constantinople separating without having obtained a successful result, I have endeavoured to ascertain whether there is any foundation for such a report, and I find that none of my colleagues have heard of it.

The Italian Ambassador also assures me that he does not believe that Austria will occupy Bosnia immediately upon a Russian Army entering Bulgaria.

With respect to the agitation which the occupation of Bosnia might cause in Italy, in favour of the annexation of the Trentino, your Lordship may remember that Count Andrassy has stated, as reported in my despatch No 759 of the 26th October, marked Most Confidential, that he would immediately avail himself of any movement of that kind, to take military measures to obtain at the expense of Italy, a better strategical frontier for Austria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 181.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 15.)

(No. 26. Confidential.) *Vienna, January 11, 1877.*

My Lord,

I LEARN from Baron Orczy that a similar communication has been made to the Austro-Hungarian Government by the Government of Germany as that referred to in your Lordship's despatch to Lord Odo Russell No. 8 of the 3rd instant, relative to the danger to which the German Colonies in Palestine are alleged to be exposed, in consequence of the irritation produced by the recruitment among the Mahommedan population of Syria.

His Excellency said that two months ago reports had reached the Government of some excitement prevailing among the Mussulmans, but they had heard nothing since to confirm them.

Instructions had nevertheless, he said, been sent to the Austrian Ambassador at Constantinople to support any representation on the subject which the Government of Germany might consider the circumstances to require.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 182.

Mr. Lumley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 15.)

(No. 5.) *Brussels, January 11, 1877.*

My Lord,

IN my despatch No. 3 of the 7th instant, I inclosed an article from the "Etoile Belge," in which, referring to a phrase in the speech addressed by the Burgomaster of Brussels to the King on New Year's Day, in which M. Anspach assumed that His Majesty had no intention of complying with the reported request of the great Powers for the employment of Belgian troops in Bulgaria, the writer observed that it was to be supposed that the Burgomaster would not have expressed himself in those terms without having been certain that he was correct in that appreciation.

Improving on this hint, the "Presse," the "Memorial Diplomatique," and other Paris papers, have insinuated that the words addressed to the King of the Belgians on the 1st January by M. Anspach had been agreed upon beforehand, an understanding to that effect having been come to between the King and his Ministers.

This statement, which has been copied into the Belgium papers, has been flatly contradicted by the semi-official "Journal de Bruxelles," which, in its issue of yesterday's date, states that it is authorized to declare that this piece of news is a pure invention, utterly without foundation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. SAVILE LUMLEY.

No. 183.

Mr. Lumley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 15.)

(No. 6. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Brussels, January 11, 1877.*

CARATHEODORY EFFENDI, the Turkish Minister, in giving me a copy of the new Turkish Constitution, read to me the Circular despatch addressed by Safvet Pasha to the Turkish Representatives abroad, in which that document was transmitted to them.

In making this communication to me, Caratheodory Effendi said it was with the utmost regret that he perceived that the antagonism which existed between the views of the Porte and those of the foreign delegates at the Conference of Constantinople was daily more and more evident, and that the irritation aroused against the Turkish Government by the opposition they considered it their duty to offer to the propositions of the Conference was likewise on the increase; and yet it was impossible not to feel that, if the delegates had at the beginning of the Conference shown something of the spirit of concession with which they now appeared to be actuated, the result might have been different.

Was it to be wondered at that Turkey should view with the utmost alarm and suspicion the proposals of the Conference when she found that they embodied the views of her deadly enemy, and that those designs, so fatal to the existence of the empire, were urged with a vehemence such as Russia herself had never adopted towards the Porte?

If, instead of treating the Turkish Constitution with contempt, Europe had acted the friendly part of a counsellor, and had assisted Turkey in carrying out a system of reform, the only fault of which seemed to be that it was considered too good to be true, the influence she might have exercised through her delegates at the Conference would have been equally beneficial to Turkey, and to all her Christian subjects. No one who knew Midhat Pasha could doubt for a moment that he would employ all his energies in securing the success of an object which had been the dream of his life, and it was evident now that the Sultan had abandoned his autocratic privileges, and had become a Constitutional Sovereign like the King of Holland or the King of the Belgians, that the great difficulty which had prevented the execution of the promises of reform made by former Sovereigns had been removed. These reforms were now placed under the safeguard of the whole nation, and all classes, races, and creeds in Turkey had an interest in their execution. This Caratheodory Effendi said had been well explained in Safvet Pasha's Circular addressed to the Representatives of Turkey at foreign Courts, and which concludes as follows:—

"After a perusal of these liberal provisions it may be asked what wish of the population of the provinces has been left unsatisfied, and what more serious and efficacious guarantees the Powers who have taken such an interest in the condition of these provinces could demand of the Imperial Government.

"Certainly the most deeply-rooted scepticism would be disarmed, though it is not impossible, failing any other element of criticism, the spirit of systematic disparagement of which we have so much to complain on the part of Europe will vent itself on the question of the execution of those provisions, and that an attempt will be made to throw doubt on the rapid and vigorous application of the new institutions.

"To those who honestly express their doubts on this point you may boldly reply that the deed will closely follow the engagement, and that independently of the will of our august Sovereign so solemnly affirmed, independently of the energetic resolutions of the Grand Vizier, whose constant efforts have been directed to the object we have now reached, the entire nation itself is animated with the same spirit and the same sentiments, and this is the best and the most solid of all guarantees. In the event, therefore,

of any comparison being made to you between the promises contained in former Imperial Hatts and the provisions of the present Constitution, you will point out clearly and forcibly the radical difference between the two classes of facts, a difference so great as to render impossible all idea of comparison.

"The Constitution is not a promise; it is a real and formal Act which has become the property of all Ottomans, and the development of which can only be delayed or arrested by the will of the nation combined with that of the Sovereign.

"This solemn and definitive Act has not been asked for nor advised by Europe. The Imperial Government in promulgating it cannot have had the intention of giving satisfaction to foreign desires or ideas. It has been subjected to no other pressure or influence than those of reason and patriotism.

"This is why we now ask Europe to have confidence in our young institutions and find in them the complete guarantee for those interests she has undertaken to protect.

"We have the right to testify with pride to the fact that the solicitude of Europe has been anticipated and exceeded by the generous and supreme initiative of our own Sovereign."

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. SAVILE LUMLEY.

P.S. *January* 14, 1877.—Since writing the above the text of the circular addressed by Safvet Pasha to the Turkish Representatives abroad on the occasion of the promulgation of the Constitution has been published in the "Journal de Bruxelles" of this date, and, as I have not yet seen this interesting document in the English papers, I inclose a copy of it herewith.

J. S. L.

No. 184.

Mr. Lumley to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 15.)

(No. 9.)
Brussels, January 14, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a letter published in the "Journal de Bruxelles" of this date, from its correspondent at St. Petersburgh, giving a curious account of the effect produced in Russia by the publication of the "Turkish Constitution."

"We are beginning to see clearer in the interminable Eastern question," says the writer. "The Russian Government decidedly does not want to go to war, and it seems certain that the Conference will terminate pacifically.

"The Turkish Constitution, which the Russian papers affect to look upon as a bad joke, has in reality produced an immense effect on public opinion in Russia, and has greatly contributed to give a fresh current to ideas in this country.

"It is impossible to conceal the fact that the campaign begun with such éclat by Russia has ended in a check.

"Those who allowed themselves to be carried away by the Slavonic Committees, and who applauded with such enthusiasm the speech of the Czar at Moscow, are naturally disappointed and dissatisfied.

"The large sums spent on the mobilization of the army weigh heavily on the budget, and Russian finances, which looked forward to a prosperous future, will be considerably embarrassed.

"On the whole the situation is gloomy, and, after the chimerical hopes so madly fostered, the deception is cruel.

"In order to escape from their embarrassments, it has become necessary to take some step which will strike public opinion by opening out fresh horizons.

"The Proclamation of a Constitution is already spoken of. It is evident that Russia cannot in this respect remain behind Turkey, and since the Sultan is a constitutional sovereign, the Czar must become one also. There seems really nothing else to be done. The state of public opinion, the financial condition, the necessity for completing reforms already begun, and lastly, the example of Turkey, all tend to render this expedient inevitable.

"No doubt at first, autocracy would give up as few as possible of its privileges, but however modest may be the attributes of Parliament, it will always have a tribune from which independent voices will make themselves heard.

"It will be necessary to resist democratic entrement, and to assume the predominence in Parliament of conservative elements which in Russia have scarcely any other Representatives than the landed proprietors.

"But with a good electoral law it may well be that Russia would obtain a more conservative Government than that she now has, thanks to the omnipotence of the bureaucracy, while at the same time she would enjoy larger and less precarious liberties."

It would indeed be a remarkable circumstance if the Turkish Constitution which has been treated with such contempt by the European Conference at Constantinople, and with such ridicule by all connected with the Russian Government, should give the initiative in the completion of the system of political liberty in Russia, the basis of which has been laid by the present Emperor himself, in the great act which will render his reign for ever memorable, the emancipation of the Serfs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. SAVILE LUMLEY.

No. 185.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 29.)
Foreign Office, January 15, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to your despatch No. 2 of the 1st instant, I have to inform your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government approve the note which you addressed to Midhat Pasha on the 31st ultimo, respecting the sentence passed on Achmet Agha, and of your having instructed Mr. Baring to leave the Commission at Philippopolis if the sentence is not carried out.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 186.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Stuart.

(No. 3.)
Foreign Office, January 15, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 295 of the 18th ultimo, reporting your conversations with M. Commonnduros and M. Contostavlos upon the subject of the claims of the Hellenic population of Turkey to have secured to them whatever rights and privileges were about to be granted to the Slavonic Provinces, and I have to approve the language which you held on those occasions.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 187.

*Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.** —(*Received January* 15.)

(Telegraphic.)
Rome, January 15, 1877.

I HAVE read your Lordship's No. 13 to Minister for Foreign Affairs. He admits General Menebrea's arguments as a secondary reason for Italian objection to Austrian annexation of Bosnia, but the principal one is that it would materially affect balance of power in the Adriatic, and would consequently be diplomatically opposed by Italy to the utmost. His Excellency does not anticipate any movement in Italy about the Trentino which the Government could not properly control, and they would certainly not raise any claim to such territory on account of Austrian aggrandizement.

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* Repeated to Constantinople, Paris, Berlin, St. Petersburgh, and Vienna.

No. 188.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 15, 5 P.M.)

Constantinople, January 15, 1877, 1·45 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

FOLLOWING from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroom, dated yesterday:—Russian Consul has just received by telegram instructions to hold himself in readiness to leave the instant orders are sent, Conference being unsuccessful.

No. 189.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 16, 1877.)

(No. 56. Political.)

Erzeroom, December 22, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE to report that Samih Pasha returned here from Kars on the 19th instant.

I saw his Excellency yesterday. I had a long conversation with him on the defences of Kars.

He explained to me where new points had been fortified, and where the old line of fortifications had been strengthened.

From what I could gather, it appears to me that while the efforts of the Turks have been concentrated in strengthening the Tahmasb line of works, which were originally constructed by Sir W. F. Williams to relieve the main-line by bearing the brunt of the first attack in that direction, the really weak point of Kars, the line of forts called the "Ingliz Tabias," has been neglected.

It is, I believe, acknowledged that General Mouravieff committed a serious error on the 29th September, 1855, in directing his main attack against Tahmasb, and making only a diversion on the Ingliz Tabias. I do not believe this error would be repeated a second time.

The Ingliz Tabias form the key to the fortress of Kars. Once they are carried, Kars and all its forts must surrender.

The ground up to this line rises from the Tchakmak Valley by a gentle smooth incline, as easy to go up for cavalry as infantry; and the crest commands all the fortified positions with the exception of the Kara Dagh.

Thus, should the Russians storm Kars, I believe their efforts would this time be directed only against the Ingliz Tabias.

It is, however, doubtful if any attempt would be made against Kars.

The fortress commands no pass or gorge through which an enemy must pass to invade this Province. An army need not go within ten miles of it, and, therefore, could not place itself within range of its guns.

Kars, though it has been turned into a powerful fortress, is, in reality, useful only as a fortified camp to give refuge to an army in case of need, or to cover an inferior force which might harass the line of communication of an invading body.

As such it would prove formidable, for it commands two of the roads into this Province, that from Alexandropol and that from Akhalsik. But to make it useful in this sense, a corps of at least 40,000 men, properly found and commanded by energetic efficient officers, would be required.

The Turks have neither the men, the officers, nor the means for creating such a force; consequently, Kars, as it is now, can only prove an obstacle to an army which could not afford to leave a masking force.

Should the Russians advance, it is probable they would march in three columns. One by Ardahan and three to the east of Erzeroom; one by a line some eight or ten miles south of Kars, through the Soghanlee to Erzeroom; and one by Beyazid, through Passin Plain, and by Khinnis to Erzeroom. A corps would be left to observe Kars and hold in check its garrison, and if the Russians were anxious not to lose a day, the same would be done with the fortified position of Ardahan.

An attack on Kars would of necessity cost the Russians heavy loss and much waste of time, without any compensating gain, for it would not advance them a step in reducing the country; they would still have to force the passes leading from the various points indicated to Erzeroom, and Erzeroom would have to be reduced. But by merely masking Kars and advancing into the heart of the Province their fortress would be isolated, and probably its surrender would follow immediately on the fall of Erzeroom.

ERRATUM.

Nos. 189 and 190 should have been numbered as Nos. 55 and 56, Political, from Consul Zohrab, and not Nos. 56 and 57.

No. 190*.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 16, 1877.)

(No. 57. Political.)

Erzeroom, December 24, 1876.

My Lord,

I REGRET to state that in my despatch No. 54, Political, I understated the loss suffered by the fire at Van. I have received further details, by which I learn that three-fourths of the business quarter of the town, estimated at from 800 to 1,000 buildings, occupied entirely by Christian traders, have been destroyed, and while about one-quarter of the goods in the shops was burnt, three-quarters were stolen by the troops and by Koords.

I am told that the Christians of Van, feeling insecure in their houses, which are all outside the walls, were in the habit of keeping all their valuables in money, jewels, bonds, deeds, and books in cellars under their shops; these valuables have all been either destroyed or carried away, and thus the owner or occupant of every building burnt has been utterly ruined.

The Christians complain bitterly of the conduct of the Government officials and soldiers, whom they accuse of having directed their efforts while the fire lasted to breaking open, carrying off, and concealing property, instead of endeavouring to arrest the flames.

A Commission has been appointed to search for and collect lost property, but as nothing has as yet been recovered, the Christians do not believe that anything will be got back, even if the Government were desirous of finding the stolen property, as ample time has been given to the robbers to carry off their booty to the mountains.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

I would not venture on these remarks had I not been made intimately acquainted with Kars during the siege of 1855, and had I not had occasion frequently to discuss, during my stay in Russia, the military operations of that year.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 190.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 16, 1877.)

(No. 57. Political.)

Erzeroom, December 22, 1876.

My Lord,

SAMIH PASHA has communicated to me the following information, received from the officer in command on the frontier near Alexandropol.

About 3,000 felt-lined tents have been received by the Russian army.

Troops of the reserve have been arriving at Alexandropol at the rate of about 1,000 men a day.

The Russian villages running along the frontier, have received orders to hold all their carts at the disposal of the military, and to keep their draught oxen and horses in active exercise, so as to be ready for instant work, and to resist cold. The pay for carts carrying thirty poods (1,080 lbs.), is forty roubles per month, and for those loading forty poods (1,440 lbs.), sixty roubles.

A special staff of about forty officers has been attached to head-quarters at Alexandropol. These officers are dressed in the costume of the Karapapuks (the dress of the population of Shuraghiel and Karsplain), and their duty, it is supposed, will be to act as guides to an advancing force. It is believed that all these officers are intimately acquainted with this part of Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 191.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 16, 1877.)

(No. 58. Political.)

Erzeroom, December 26, 1876.

My Lord,

THE condition of the agricultural classes and of traders in this province is daily becoming more critical, and if an immediate change is not made in the action of the Government, and if the police of the country is not efficiently and honestly maintained, the Christians will be left quite destitute.

The demands of the Government press with crushing weight on all classes. Arrears of taxes (the validity of which no Court of Justice could admit), current taxes, taxes in advance, aid in money for the war, contributions in kind for the army, means of transport for munitions of war and provisions, are exacted from the Christians and from the Mussulman peasants with pitiless severity, and already thousands of families have been so reduced that they live only by public charity. Unscrupulous employés—and this term can be applied to almost every servant of the Porte—take advantage of the pressing needs of the Government to augment their own exactions, and as there is no possibility of checking such corruption, seeing that the officers who are supposed to watch over and and protect the people are the culprits, it is impossible to state what can be done, while Turkish officials have power, to put an end to this systematic spoliation of the people.

Thus far the strain falls equally upon the Christians and the Mussulman peasants. But the Christians seem now to have a new element of destruction brought against them.

Incendiary fires are commencing which may, as the Administration appear to take no notice of them, become so frequent as to render property of no value whatever.

I have already reported the destructive fire at Van. A week since a large quantity of hay was set fire to by some Mussulmans at the village of Tchiflik, three miles from Erzeroom, and the next night the same crime was repeated at Guez, another village close by. Robberies, also, by bands of Mussulman peasants are perpetrated daily in the Christian villages.

These crimes pass unnoticed by the authorities, who, when appealed to by the

victims, reply that nothing can be done without these complaints being substantiated by witnesses.

From the villages in the various districts which seem to be given entirely over to pillage by officers, soldiers, Koords, and bands of Mussulmans, most distressing accounts reach this.

Samih Pasha acknowledged to me to-day that much suffering existed, and he was endeavouring to alleviate the burden thrown on the villages on the highways, which had soldiers constantly quartered on them, by appointing officers to collect the required provisions from villages remote from the highways. And he has promised to write and instruct the Governor and district officials to keep a more strict watch over the various villages to prevent oppression, and directing them to accept in payment of taxes all obligations which may have been given for provisions supplied to the military.

This order may bring some slight relief, but I doubt it, and I said so; for, as I frankly told his Excellency, the persons the villagers had to dread most were the officials and the lower grades of officers, who were the real oppressors and robbers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 192.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 16, 1877.)

(No. 59. Political.) *Erzeroom, December* 26, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that the province of Van has been separated from Erzeroom, and elevated into a vilayet, and the districts of Moosh and Hekiareh have been made dependent on it.

Hassan Bey, the Governor of Kharipoot, whose good conduct I have reported to your Lordship, has been promoted to the rank of Vizier, and appointed to this newly-created province.

A suggestion made to-day by Samih Pasha, in regard to the Government of Van, which up to the present was under his jurisdiction, is worthy of attention. The majority of the population of the new province being Armenian, Samih Pasha suggests the appointment of a Christian Lieutenant-Governor (Mouavin) to assist the Valy. Such an appointment, he said, would not only secure fair treatment to the Christians, but, by habituating the Mussulmans, who are very fanatic in that region, to the presence of a Christian holding a high position, would gradually lead them to accept a Christian Governor later. He believes a Christian would prove a better administrator for that province than a Mussulman.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 193.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 16, 1877.)

(No. 31. Political.) *Trebizond, December* 25, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report the arrival lately from Constantinople of four battalions of infantry, which, together with the fifteen whose passage I mentioned in my despatch No. 29 of the 13th instant, make a total of nineteen battalions in destination to Erzeroom and Kars.

As some of these battalions had not their complement, it is reckoned that they represent only about 10,000 men. I am told that no more troops are expected at present for Erzeroom.

All the soldiers who passed here having been received by their co-religionists with unusual marks of attention, this circumstance can be taken as a sign of the spirit which animates at present the Mussulman population of this town.

The troops were offered substantial dinners by the inhabitants of the quarters in which they lived (there being no barracks here), as well as by the rich Turks; while the Pasha and the principal Government functionaries had the cloth spread every evening for the officers of all ranks; their linen was washed without retribution, and other small

services were daily rendered to them; the few sick who were among the troops were attended with particular care by the Mussulmans. The Christians have not taken the least share in these marks of sympathy.

Two hired transports, with three battalions on board, have called here a few days ago on their way to Batoom. The total of troops which have passed for that place through Trebizond amounts to eight battalions, or about 4,000 men.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 194.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 16, 1877.)

(No. 32. Political.) *Trebizond, December* 28, 1876.

My Lord,

I AM informed by the Deputy-Governor of Artwin, who came lately from that place, that the inhabitants of the Lagistan are animated with the most warlike spirit. It would appear that upwards of 20,000 men are under arms, and drilling in expectation of the war between Turkey and Russia; they have decided to send, on the first outbreak of hostilities, their families towards the west, in order to avoid being hindered in their movements; all the men capable of bearing arms will then join those who have already volunteered. However, as the whole of the male population in the Lagistan is reckoned to be about 70,000, the addition (taking into account children and old men to be deducted) cannot be very important.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 195.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 16.)

(No. 3.) *Tiflis, January* 5, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE to inform your Lordship that a Russian General, by name Saffiraglu, formerly an influential Chief among Kurds, and for some time past in the pay of the Russian Government undertook to raise a Kurdish contingent of 10,000 men for service against the Porte; a large sum was advanced to the said General for this purpose, he having, however, been lately detected corresponding with the Porte with the object of making common cause against Russia, has now been arrested at Alexandropol, and will, it is said, be executed. As regards the construction of the forts on River Etrek, mentioned in despatch No. 17, I am told it is the intention of the Russians to take possession of the route between Kyzil-Arvat and Balkh; if this be true it is reasonable to suppose that Serachs will be occupied, and also Akteppe, lying on the road to Herat, south of Merv. I have no means of ascertaining when this project is likely to be realized, but if effected, the next step will be the occupation of Herat, or the passes to the north of it. If the Turcoman tribes to the east and west of Merv could be induced to become the subjects of Cabul and Persia respectively, these two countries extending their frontiers to the north, so as to cut off any Russian advance to the east, much would be effected, but should this be held impossible, the question arises whether Herat, and the passes to the north of it, should not be occupied by us in co-operation with an Afghan contingent. Much, of course, would have to depend on the progress really made by Russia in the establishment of the line of forts alluded to, and this could be, perhaps, only ascertained through the survey of the road in question by British officers sent through India or Persia. In Kiepert's map of Khiva, published in Stumm's book, it will be noticed that Serachs is placed beyond Persian frontier. The probability of war breaking out having prevented the caravans from coming as usual to Tiflis, I have not had an opportunity of obtaining further information as yet on this matter. I would here suggest, should war arise between Russia and Turkey, that it might be a favourable moment for the settlement of this matter. There is a report to-day that war has been declared between Russia and Turkey; it is impossible to foretell who will be victorious; it must, however, be borne in mind, if Russia be victorious and acquire possession of Asia Minor that the occupation of Syria, which is the key to Egypt, together with the occupation of the line

of the Euphrates Valley, will follow as a matter of course; what steps should be taken to prevent the absorption of all these countries by Russia, is a point on which your Lordship can alone determine.

I have, &c.
(Signed) O. T. RICKETTS.

No. 196.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 16.)

(No. 4. Political.) *Galatz, January 10, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that I this day telegraphed to Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General at Bucharest informing him that there had arrived at Galatz a contractor, who was in negotiation for the purchase of stores, such as cattle, flour, biscuit, &c., for the Russian army of the South.

This gentleman's name is Baron M. von Krant; he came here from Jassy, and will proceed hence to Ibraila and Bucharest. He has telegraphed for some one from Bucharest to meet him, and I am told that a considerable purchase of preserved meats is in contemplation at that place.

He stated, in conversation with a British merchant, that there are 180,000 men at Kicheneff, and 80,000 at Tiflis, and that they will be ready to march in twelve days.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PERCY SANDERSON.

P.S.—I have just heard that Baron von Krant has left for Ibraila but will return to-morrow. He has at present concluded no contract.

No. 197.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha. January 16.)

Constantinople, le 15 Janvier, 1877.

(Télégraphique.)

DANS la séance d'aujourd'hui de la Conférence, le Marquis de Salisbury a présenté, au nom de ses collègues, un nouveau projet qui, quoique mitigé sous plusieurs rapports, contenait toujours les deux points relatifs à la Commission Internationale et à la nomination des Valis avec l'agrément préalable des Puissances. Sa Seigneurie a prononcé en même temps un discours pour déclarer que, dans le cas où ce nouveau projet définitif ne serait pas accepté par la Sublime Porte jusqu'à Jeudi prochain, il n'y aurait plus de base de discussion et qu'elle sera obligée de quitter Constantinople.

Tous les Représentants des Puissances ont tenu le même langage, en ajoutant qu'ils laisseraient ici des Chargés d'Affaires. Le Général Ignatiew seul n'a pas ajouté qu'il remettrait la gestion de l'Ambassade de Russie à un Chargé d'Affaires. J'ai répondu que la Sublime Porte ne saurait adhérer d'aucune façon aux deux propositions susmentionnées; que, quant aux autres points, le Gouvernement Impérial est disposé à entrer en discussion si les deux propositions sont définitivement écartées du programme. J'ai conclu en disant que la question sera soumise à un Conseil Général.

Je dois ajouter que le Sultan, le Ministère, et toute la nation sont unanimes pour rejeter catégoriquement les deux propositions dont il s'agit. Il est certain que le Conseil Général qui va se réunir, et auquel les Vakiaveles aussi sont invités à prendre part, n'y consentira à aucun prix. Parmi 20,000,000 d'Ottomans il n'y pas un seul qui pût les accepter, excepté peut-être quelque individu malintentionné. Ce n'est pas une concession raisonnable qu'on nous demande, c'est une proposition injurieuse, c'est la mutilation de l'Empire. Le Gouvernement Impérial ne pourra jamais laisser entamer son indépendance avant d'avoir épuisé tous ses moyens de résistance; et, comme c'est une question de vie ou de mort pour lui, il doit agir en conséquence.

Veuillez entretenir de ce qui précède le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères et me télégraphier sa réponse.

No. 198.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 16.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, January 16, 1877.*

I FORWARDED yesterday a report of General Tchernaieff's expulsion from Bohemia.

The Russian Ambassador having been instructed to ask an explanation of his arrest, Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs said that he was only ordered to leave because his proceedings were causing disturbances, and on his refusal, was forced to do so.

Many persons have been arrested, but as he has been followed by others to (Dresden)? who will treat him as a martyr, the expediency of interfering with him may be doubtful.

No. 199.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 16.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Most Confidential.) *Vienna, January 16, 1877.*

THE object of the Russian Ambassador's visit to Pesth has been to urge Count Andrassy not to be influenced by Midhat Pasha, who, he said, is endeavouring to cause dissension among the members of the Conference by holding different language to each, and who had offered to accept Russia's wishes for the extension of Montenegrin territory to the sea, if General Ignatiew would support him in other questions.

Count Andrassy answered that he was as anxious as the Russian Government for a successful issue of the Conference, but he could not sit at General Ignatiew's feet like Count Zichy.

No. 200.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 16, night.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Berlin, January 16, 1877, 5·16 P.M.*

PRINCE BISMARCK desires me to assure your Lordship that there is no change whatever in his policy, and that he cannot understand what can have led to this erroneous supposition.

He objects to signing the final Protocol proposed by Russia, and hopes Her Majesty's Government will equally reject it.

No. 201.

Report addressed by Saadoullah Bey to the Grand Vizier.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January 17, 1877.)

(Traduction.)

PAR son télégramme responsif du 9 Novembre, 1292, votre Altesse nous a invité à lui fournir sans retard des renseignements détaillés et précis sur le nombre des maisons incendiées dont la reconstruction ne pourrait pas avoir lieu à cause de la saison avancée, ainsi que sur les localités où devraient être installées les familles restées sans abri. Conformément à cet ordre Vézirial, nous avons l'honneur de soumettre à votre Altesse l'état général ci-joint dressé sur des relevés exacts envoyés à cet effet par les sous-Commissions.

Ainsi qu'il résulte de cette pièce, les districts qui ont été le plus éprouvés par les derniers événements sont ceux de Philippopoli et de Bazardjik; des 9,475 maisons qui composaient les 54 villages de ces deux districts, 6,300 ont été la proie des flammes. Sur ce nombre, 1,598 maisons ont déjà été reconstruites, et 1,914 autres sont en voie de construction. Les travaux sont poussés avec la plus grande activité, sous la surveillance de nombreux agents et comités, et l'on a tout lieu d'espérer que le beau temps aidant, ils pourront être achevés sous peu.

La question de l'installation des victimes de l'incendie pourra alors être considérée

comme presque réglée d'une manière satisfaisante. Mais comme il vaut bien mieux s'en rapporter aux résultats déjà acquis que de se baser sur des probabilités, nous allons établir nos calculs sur l'état actuel des choses. Or le chiffre des maisons qui n'ont pas été détruites par l'incendie, ajouté au chiffre de celui qui viennent d'être reconstruites, s'élèvent à plus de la moitié des demeures primitives, il s'ensuit que pour cette année une seule et même maison devra servir d'habitation pour deux familles.

Il est cependant à remarquer que tous les villages n'ont pas été ravagés par le feu au même degré; les uns n'ont été détruits qu'en partie, tandis que d'autres l'ont été entièrement. Par conséquent la disposition ci-dessus ne saurait s'appliquer à tous les villages indistinctement. Dans ces conditions, il devient nécessaire ou de transporter ailleurs les villageois dépourvus de gites, ou de réparer les baraques de manière à les rendre habitables pendant les rigueurs de l'hiver. Aussi la Commission a-t-elle donné pour instructions à ses divers comités de transférer dans les localités avoisinantes les habitants des villages dont les maisons n'auraient pas été terminées; de leur procurer toutes les facilités nécessaires, telles que le transport par des chariots des enfants, des vieillards et des infirmes, ainsi que des provisions de bouche qui leur auraient déjà été distribuées et d'en fournir, à leur installation, à ceux qui n'en auraient pas encore reçues, afin de ne pas les abandonner à la charge de leurs hôtes.

La plupart des paysans ont préféré cependant passer l'hiver dans leurs villages pour mettre leurs affaires en ordre, et comme on ne saurait les faire déménager de force, il a été jugé convenable de rendre plus confortables les baraques dans les localités où le nombre des maisons est insuffisant. En conséquence, les Commissions ont reçu pour instructions ultérieures de répartir les paysans sans abri dans les maisons du village, si elles sont en nombre suffisant; dans le cas contraire, de réparer les baraques existantes, et pour les localités où cette double mesure ne serait pas praticable, de transférer dans les villages circonvoisins les habitants manquant d'asile. Des agents spéciaux ont même été désignés pour veiller à la stricte et bonne exécution de ces dispositions.

Les paysans étant en ce moment occupés à la reconstruction de leurs maisons on ne peut, dès maintenant et avant que les travaux n'aient été menés à fin, connaître le nombre de ceux qui resteront chez eux et de ceux qui seront transférés dans d'autres villages.

De fortes probabilités et le progrès continuel des travaux nous font pourtant espérer qu'on n'aura guère besoin de recourir au mode de délogement. Des agents sont chargés de s'enquérir de l'installation des villageois et des garanties de sécurité que leurs nouvelles demeures offrent contre les intempérées de l'hiver. Nous nous réservons de faire parvenir à votre Altesse ces renseignements qui seront consignés dans les certificats émanés des mouktars de chaque village.

Les localités les plus éprouvées et qui méritent par cela même toute notre attention et toute notre sollicitude, sont les villages de Batak, de Parasdine-Dérbent, et de Peroussitcha. A Batak il a été reconstruit jusqu'ici 260 maisons; le reste est en voie de construction.

Les habitants de Batak ont tous été réinstallés chez eux, à l'exception de cinq à dix familles qui sont, en attendant l'achèvement de leurs logements, installées dans des baraques confortables.

Pour ce qui est de Parasdine-Dérbent, ses habitants étant pour la plupart industriels ou commerçants, ils se sont provisoirement installés, les uns à Carlova, les autres à Akdjé Kilissa ou ailleurs; ceux qui, n'ayant pas quitté le village, avaient été logés sous des tentes, viennent d'être, d'après ce qui nous informe le Commissaire Spécial, installés dans le batiment récemment construit dans ce village, et les tentes ont été déjà supprimées. De même, la construction de 89 maisons ayant été terminée dans le village de Pérouchitza, ses habitants y ont été en partie installés; les autres n'ayant pas voulu, malgré l'avis des autorités, se rendre dans les villages des alentours, on est en train de réparer leurs baraques et d'achever leurs demeurs.

On voit par ce qui précède que la population de ces trois villages, les plus importants sous le rapport du chiffre de leurs habitants et de leur étendue, est en ce moment réinstallée presque tout entière chez elle. Quant aux villages secondaires, tels que Tchoumlek, Yéni-Keuy, Chenk, Ouzoundja-Keuy, Zindjirli, et Eurekli, dont les constructions ne sont pas aussi avancées, on y travaille avec une infatigable activité.

En ce qui regarde les districts de Selimno, de Sofia, et de Tirnova, le premier de ces districts n'a eu qu'un seul village détruit, celui de Boyadjik. Sur les 108 maisons incendiées, 86 ont été rebâties, et 8 autres sont en voie de construction. Dans le vilayet de Sofia, le village de Ramanitcha, dépendant d'Izladi, a eu 7 maisons

d'incendiées; Ismosokia, 21; Raslocdja, 9; Racobdja, 40; et Façona, 32; toutes ces maisons, à l'exception de celles de Racobdja et de Façona, ont été reconstruites. Dans le Sandjak de Tirnova, le district de Serai a seul été ravagé par le feu; six de ses villages ont eu 541 maisons réduites en cendre. En outre, dans deux villages du district de Gabrova, 15 maisons ont brûlé; cependant, comme le nombre des habitations, qui n'ont pas été endommagées dépasse 3,000, les autorités locales nous informent que toutes les familles éprouvées ont trouvé un abri dans les mêmes villages.

Il résulte de tout ce qui précède que les maisons incendiées de Sélimno, de Sofia, et de Tirnova, étant en petit nombre, leurs habitants ont pu être facilement réinstallés chez eux, et qu'en ce qui regarde les populations des villages détruits dépendant de Philippopoli et de Bazardjik, les difficultés de leur logement ayant été aplanies les familles éprouvées ne courent plus le risque de rester sans abri pendant la mauvaise saison, grâce aux mesures efficaces que, sous les auspices de notre auguste Souverain, votre Altesse a adoptées, en décrétant la prompte reconstruction des maisons incendiées. Quant aux dispositions à prendre pour assurer le bien-être de ces populations et leur procurer des céréales, des animaux, et des instruments aratoires, la Commission y pourvoira au fur et à mesure de leurs besoins, et elle aura l'honneur de soumettre prochainement à la haute appréciation de votre Altesse un état circonstancié des résultats obtenus.

Le 21 Novembre, 1876.

No. 202.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(*Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January* 17.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 17 Janvier*, 1877.

L'AMBASSADEUR de Russie laissera ici, à l'instar des autres, un Chargé d'Affaires après son départ.

No. 203.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, January* 17, 1877, 4 P.M.

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, inform Prince Bismarck that the British Plenipotentiaries are not authorised to sign any Protocol.

No. 204.

The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.

(No. 2.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 17, 1877.

I TRANSMIT herewith a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris, reporting his conversation with M. Schendré,* who takes the title of Diplomatic Agent of Roumania at that capital, upon the subject of the objections entertained by the Government of Prince Charles to the wording of certain articles in the new Ottoman Constitution; and I have to instruct you to report how far M. Schendré is justified in stating that the Jews in the Principalities are neither ill-treated nor discontented.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

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* No. 101.

No. 205.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(No. 36.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, January* 17, 1877.

IN reply to that part of your Excellency's telegram of yesterday, in which you stated that Prince Bismarck objected to the signature of the final Protocol proposed by Russia, and hoped that Her Majesty's Government would also reject the proposal, I have to inform you that the British Plenipotentiaries are not authorized to sign any Protocol, and I should wish you to state this to Prince Bismarck.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 206.

Consul Skene to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 16, 1877.)

(No. 13. Political.)
My Lord, *Aleppo, December* 30, 1876.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of my despatch No. 38 to Sir Henry Elliot, relative to disturbances in this Province, and the probability of their not becoming more serious.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

Inclosure in No. 206.

Consul Skene to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Aleppo, December* 30, 1876.

ANOTHER incident has occurred to augment the apprehensions of the Christians at Aleppo. Two soldiers of the Reserve were passing the shop of an Armenian while he was in the act of counting the receipts of the week. They entered, seized the bag of money, and made off. He followed them, shouting, "Stop thief!" and one of them, turning upon him, stabbed him with a knife. The Armenian fell, but the wound has not been pronounced mortal, and the soldiers are in custody for trial.

Notwithstanding the numerous similar acts which I have had the honour to report to your Excellency of late, I am still of opinion that no general conflict between Mussulmans and Christians will take place in this Province. In individual cases there is abundant evidence of the same hostility which gave rise to the insurrection of the year 1850 at Aleppo, but the majority of the Mussulman population has not forgotten its severe retribution, upwards of 1,000 insurgents having then been bayoneted in the streets and mosques by troops under the energetic and skilful command of the late Polish General Bem. There is now here another efficient Commandant of the Garrison, Omer Pasha, who was formerly a Colonel in the Russian army, and who succeeded in preventing an imminent outbreak at Aleppo in 1860; and there is a Governor-General, Emin Pasha, who evinces great activity and ability, with an earnest desire to do justice to all classes of the inhabitants. On the other hand, there is a very influential Mufti, Hadji Effendi Ginbri, who hates the name of Christian, and who appears to harbour sinister designs. In the Provincial Council his voice is always raised in a manner which inflames the exclusive prejudices of Islam, and strikes terror among the timid Christians. He belongs to one of the two predominant families of Aleppo, and, having succeeded in securing supremacy for a time over the rival family of Muderris, he takes every opportunity, and uses every possible expedient, for enhancing his power. The last indication of this has been the introduction into Mahometan worship of a special prayer in his favour, expressly naming him, at the mosques. On a previous occasion, when the office of Mufti fell vacant by the death of Paha Effendi, an enlightened and benevolent man, the Ginbri and Muderris families had a fierce struggle for the preference of a member of each, but the late Kurd Ahmed Pasha, who was the best of twenty-three Governors-General that I have been accredited to at Aleppo, wisely rejected both the claims, and recommended to the Porte an obscure and moderate, though very learned, candidate to be raised to the dignity

contended for. That Mufti has recently resigned his post, and the present Governor-General was called upon to make another choice before he had time to become aware of all such local particulars. A Ginbri was unfortunately preferred, and the Muderris, one of whom, Hussein Effendi, is a powerful member of the Provincial Council, seem intent on creating difficulties in the way of their rival, and consequently of the Turkish Government. It was a Muderris who fomented all the troubles of the Christians in 1850, the then Mufti, Takieddin Effendi, now Governor-General of the Province of Hedjaz. Aleppo cannot, therefore, be considered quite safe without the exclusion of those two dangerous local magnates and their immediate partisans from the exercise of official functions here and at Constantinople, whither it is probable that one of each family will be sent as a member of the new Chamber of Deputies, the sons of Hussein Effendi Muderris, whose election can easily be secured by their respective adherents.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

No. 207.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 18.)

(No. 4.)
My Lord, *Tyflis, January* 7, 1877.

I HAVE been informed that further reinforcements, amounting to 50,000 men, are expected from Russia, of these 16,000 will be sent to Daghestan. This will make combatant army of frontier from 110,000 to 120,000 men as will be explained next despatch. Four guns have been placed in position four miles north of Poti, two guns on an island there, and four guns to south of that port.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. T. RICKETTS.

No. 208.

Messrs. Rothschild and Sons to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 18.)

My Lord, *New Court, January* 18, 1877.

WE trust we may be excused for troubling your Lordship respecting the sad and painful accounts which have been received of the atrocities and persecutions perpetrated in the neighbourhood of Jassy, on the poor and unprotected Jews or Moldavia.

The letters which have come to hand are from too respectable sources to leave any doubt as to the correctness of the painful details they bring, and which, therefore, call for immediate help being rendered to these poor and distressed sufferers.

Remembering, and gratefully acknowledging, the many previous occasions on which efforts of our Government have been exerted to obtain protection for our co-religionists abroad, whenever interference in their behalf has been necessary, we feel sure that we shall not appeal in vain to you to use your powerful influence on behalf of those now so cruelly and unjustly persecuted, and who stand so urgently in need of help and protection.

We hope we may be excused in asking your Lordship to telegraph to the British Consuls in Jassy and Bucharest to this effect.

Renewing to your Lordship our excuses for troubling with this appeal, we have, &c.,
(Signed) N. M. ROTHSCHILD AND SONS.

No. 209.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 30.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 18, 1877.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 1399 of the 29th ultimo, reporting the return of Major-General Sir A. Kemball from Nisch, and bearing witness to the great ability and tact which he has displayed during the time that he has been employed at the head-quarters of the Turkish army, I have to instruct your Excellency to convey to

Sir A. Kemball the thanks of Her Majesty's Government for his very valuable services, which are highly appreciated.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 210.

The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.

(No. 5.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 18, 1877.

M. SCHENDRÉ, Agent for Roumania in Paris, being in this country, wrote to me a few day ago to request an interview, and called upon me this afternoon by appointment.

He spoke to me at some length of the position of Roumania, and of the desire of the Roumanian Government to avoid taking part in any contest that might ensue between Russia and Turkey, denying that there was any desire on the part of Prince Charles or his advisers to ally themselves with the former Power. They were, on the contrary, afraid of Russian designs, and wished to keep free from Russian influence. M. Schendré asked whether it would not be possible to guarantee to Roumania a neutral position similar to that of Belgium.

I said that the proposal was one to which Her Majesty's Government might, perhaps, have no objection, but it could scarcely be made to the European Powers collectively, for it would, in fact, amount to barring to Russia her principal opening for attack upon Turkey, a measure to which she could not be expected to give a willing consent.

M. Schendré then inquired whether a portion of Roumania could not be neutralised, leaving open only that part which might be requisite for the access of Russian forces directed against Turkey.

This, I said, seemed to me no more practicable than his previous suggestion, for its effect would be to point out and, in some degree, sanction such a mode of aggression.

M. Schendré asked whether the matter could not be laid before the Conference.

I replied that I thought this also was impossible. The Conference had met for the consideration of other questions, and its sittings were drawing to a close. I added, however, that I understood the difficulties of the position in which Prince Charles found himself placed, that I quite believed that his Government were sincerely desirous of maintaining a neutral attitude, and that I should be very ready to receive and consider any representations which they wished to address to me on the subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 211.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18, 6·26 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January* 18, 1877, 4 6 P.M.

A LARGE General Council, to which the proposals of Powers were submitted, has unanimously rejected them. Details later.

No. 212.

Safvet Pasha to Aleko Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January 19, 1877.)

Le 26 Décembre, 1876.

J'AI reçu la dépêche que votre Excellence a bien voulu m'adresser le 6 Décembre, relativement à la mission du Prince Ghika en Europe.

Cette misson doit avoir, en effet, pour but d'assurer, avec l'appui des Puissances Garantes, la neutralité absolue des Principautés-Unies en cas de guerre entre la Turquie et la Russie. M. Démètre Bratiano, qui se trouve actuellement ici, travaille dans le même sens.

Le Gouvernement Princier, ne se sentant ni la force ni le courage de s'opposer à l'entrée des troupes Russes dans son territoire, et ne voulant pas être soutenu par l'appui matériel que le Gouvernement Impérial est prêt à lui donner en cas d'invasion, cherche vainement à obtenir des Puissances Garantes la promesse formelle que sa neutralité serait respectée par elles. Nous souhaitons que les démarches du Gouvernement des Principautés-Unies à ce sujet soient couronnées d'un plein succès; mais nous doutons cependant qu'un pareil engagement puisse être pris par la Russie qui s'interdirait par là l'accès du Danube à ses troupes. En supposant même un instant qu'elle eût pris cet engagement, qui pouvait garantir qu'elle le respecterait, à moins que les Puissances n'aient déclaré d'avance que la violation par une des Puissances Contractantes du système de neutralité assuré à la Roumanie serait considéré comme un *casus belli?*

Si des considérations d'un ordre élevé et dont votre Excellence est la première à apprécier la délicatesse ne nous en empêchaient, nous n'hésiterions pas à prendre l'initiative de proposer formellement aux Puissances Garantes de prendre en considération la demande de la Roumanie concernant sa neutralité.

De notre part, nous lui avons déjà promis de respecter sa neutralité autant qu'elle le serait par la Russie.

Il serait effectivement d'un grand avantage pour nous de voir la neutralité des Principautés-Unies assurée d'une manière solide par les Grandes Puissances.

Vous voudrez bien appuyer tant dans vos entretiens avec le Comte Andrassy qu'avec le Gérant du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, si toutefois l'occasion s'en présente, la demande de la Roumanie à ce sujet.

Veuillez, &c.

No. 213.

The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, January* 19, 1877, 1·10 P.M.

FURTHER accounts have been received in England of outrages perpetrated on Jews in neighbourhood of Jassy. Inquire into this matter, and take such measures as you properly can for protection of the Jews. Send Mr. St. John the necessary instructions immediately.

Messrs. Rothschild to be informed accordingly.

No. 214.

The Earl of Derby to the Marquis of Salisbury and Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 35.)
My Lord and Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 19, 1877.

MUSURUS PASHA called upon me this afternoon to communicate to me formally the decision of the General Council held yesterday, of which, however, he said, I was doubtless already aware.

I expressed my regret at the conclusion to which the Council had come.

Musurus Pasha endeavoured to argue that the rejection of the proposals of the Powers need not entail the departure of the Ambassadors from Constantinople; but I declined to enter into this question, as I said the course to be followed had been settled some time since, and had been formally announced to the Porte.

I went on to say that as the Turkish Government had apparently made up their mind to reject the proposals of the Powers, I would venture to advise that they should take the earliest opportunity to come to an arrangement with Servia and Montenegro.

If they could succeed in satisfactorily settling their differences with those Principalities, it might considerably diminish the risk of hostile action on the part of other Powers.

Musurus Pasha thanked me, and promised to telegraph this advice to his Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 215.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Paget.

(No. 26.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January 19, 1877.*

THE Italian Ambassador informed me to-day, in conversation, that the Italian Consul at Scutari in Albania, who has been charged with complicity in the Mirdite Insurrection, has been called upon for an explanation, and absolutely denies the imputation. He declares that he has only a slight acquaintance with the Russian Consul, and none whatever with the chiefs of the insurrection, and that, far from having in any way aided or abetted insurrectionary movements, he has done all in his power to preserve tranquillity.

General Menabrea added that the Italian Consuls have instructions to use their best efforts for the pacification of any disturbances.

As regards the state of Albania, his Excellency observed that apprehensions appeared to exist lest the old privileges of the Province should be done away with by the new Constitution.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 216.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Paget.

(No. 27. Confidential.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January 19, 1877.*

THE Italian Ambassador remarked, in conversation to-day, that he heard the Austrian Government were concentrating troops in Dalmatia, and that he supposed their intention was to occupy Bosnia in concert with Russia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 217.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 19, night.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 19, 1877, 5·30 P.M.*

AT the Grand Council Grand Vizier made statement so moderate as to call forth marks of disapprobation.

He pointed out that the decision about to be taken might result in a war of which he vividly described the danger, pointing out that Russia might possibly not be the only Power to go against Turkey.

The Council was unanimous in deciding that appointment of International Commission and the control upon the nominations of Governors-General must be rejected at all risks, the Christian members being as resolute as the Mussulmans.

Grand Vizier said that, with the exception of those two points, there was nothing on which an understanding might not be come to, and he suggested that a guarantee for the execution of the reforms which should satisfy the Powers might be given by a formal communication to the Conference of the new Constitution, which was based upon the principles insisted on by it.

The acceptance of the Andrassy Note would be confirmed, including the formation of Commissions composed equally of Mussulmans and Christians for the Provinces of Bosnia, Herzegovina, the Danube, and Adrianople.

If the Conference consented to continue negotiations upon this basis, he saw no reason to despair of a favourable result. Some objection was made to this as affording the Powers too much right of interference, but no decision was taken upon it, and I imagine the Government to be still free to follow the course adopted by Grand Vizier.

No. 218.

Consul-General Stanley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 1. Political.)
My Lord, *Odessa, January 2, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report that Mr. Vice-Consul Wagstaff informs me that, owing to the opposition of Admiral Arkas, Military Governor of Nicolaief and Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Black Sea Fleet, and of the dockyard authorities at Nicolaief to the scheme mentioned in my despatch, Political, No. 25 of 12th December of converting the pontoons into a floating battery, the execution of the plan has been abandoned for the present. Among other objections Admiral Arkas considered the cost excessive, and that all the skilled labour available in the arsenal was immediately required for more important objects.

One of these objects, Mr. Wagstaff stated to be the arming of some of the steamers of the Russian Steam Navigation Company, with heavy mortars to be fired by an improved galvanic battery at the moment the vessel is on an even keel, and that experiments had been made, which when the vessel was rolling as much as 36° showed 87 per cent. of successful shots.

Such firing would be damaging to the decks of ironclads, but it may be doubted if such results were really obtained.

Mr. Wagstaff says that the Vice-Admiral Popoff sustained severer damage than was believed at the trial of her guns, reported in my despatch, Political, No. 17. After being repaired she made a second trial, and the result was still unsatisfactory.

He mentions as of some importance that the Novgorod's 11-inch guns are only served with a charge of 63lb. avoir. per cent., and the line of fire throughout the sweep of the turret, as with the "Peter the Great," is over a low freeboard, therefore no vibration or unsteadiness is produced, whereas the "Vice-Admiral Popoff" has a raised deck immediately under her guns (12-inch), and surrounding the turret, and in firing the charge of 144 lbs. avoir. per cent. the vibration and strain appears to be too heavy, so it has been decided to strengthen the upper deck by placing fresh girders between every two existing girders.

Mr. Wagstaff adds that the seamen of the Black Sea Fleet have, contrary to all expectations, been informed that on completing their seven years' service, they will be placed on the reserve list.

They are a very fine body of men, much superior in station to the soldiers, but there are not many of them, and indeed, with the exception of the two Circular Ironclads, which, when their defects shall have been made good, may be considered as among the most powerful vessels afloat in shallow waters, the whole Russian Navy in the Black Sea is not a match for one modern corvette.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. STANLEY.

No. 219

Acting Vice-Consul Gardner to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 6.)
My Lord, *Poti, January 3, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report the arrival at Poti of the 41st Regiment of the Line, and as the whole staff of this regiment with baggage, carriages, ambulances and equipments have been brought by rail it is evident Poti is intended to be the head-quarters of this regiment for some time.

The whole of the towns and villages on the coast of the Black Sea north of Poti are now quite deserted, but it appears this has been caused by the threatened outbreak of the Abkassians more than the dread of the Turks.

1,000 troops and 400 Cossacks were despatched by steamer to maintain order, and by the return steamer fifty prisoners from the neighbourhood of Sonkum Kali were landed at Poti.

2,000 troops are stationed at Moltagua, five miles south of Poti, where a temporary camp has been formed, earthworks thrown up, and four guns placed. Nearer to Poti a small battery containing two guns has been erected; on the island between the north and south outlets of the River Rhion a battery has been raised containing six guns, and north

of Poti, at Abada, a battery containing four guns has been constructed. Immense quantities of stores, provisions, dry goods and merchandize of every description are landed at this place to be passed through the Custom-house before the new tariff comes into operation.

Petroleum, sugar, and several other articles have already advanced in price 25 per cent.

Mr. G. T. Ricketts, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at Tiflis, in passing through to his post, gave instructions to forward all intelligence respecting the movements of troops, the landing of ammunition, &c., to him at Tiflis, and up to this time I have given him all the information obtainable in this quarter. I have just received instructions from Mr. Ricketts to forward to your Lordship direct any future information on these subjects with which I may become acquainted, to save the loss of time occasioned in transmitting to Tiflis, and returning to Poti for the mail via Odessa. Great preparations are now being made along the coast, and every effort made by the officers in command to complete the defences for the inspection of the Grand Duke Michael.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS GARDNER.

No. 220.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 15.)
Constantinople, January 5, 1877.

My Lord,

THERE was a meeting at the Russian Embassy to-day to consider the answer to be returned to the objections put in by the Turkish Plenipotentiaries at the last Conference to the proposals which had been submitted to them.

Believing that I possessed a greater knowledge than most of my colleagues of the character of the Turks and of their present disposition, I thought it right very freely to express my opinion that if we were still to hope to bring the labours of the Conference to a successful issue, we should not confine ourselves to an endeavour to refute the objections of the Porte, but that we must show a willingness so far to modify our proposals as to bring them back more strictly within what the Turkish Government will consider a fair interpretation of the bases upon which the Conference had been proposed to them.

It would, I thought be difficult to maintain that the proposed organization of the Provinces, the nomination of the Valis, and other officials, in the manner suggested, the deprivation of the Sultan of all authority over the movement of his troops, and the appointment of a Commission with such extended powers as those to be attributed to it, would not seriously impair the independence of the Porte, which we had promised to respect, and render probable the rejection of such demands.

I was not criticizing the merits of the proposals themselves, but we must remember that the success of the Conference, of which we need not despair, depended upon their acceptance by the Turks, which I believe could only be obtained by sufficient modifications to bring them within what the Porte would regard as the limits of the programme.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 221.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 21.)

(No. 17. Confidential.)
Constantinople, January 8, 1877.

My Lord,

THIS morning I took to Midhat Pasha the inclosed paper which I had received from the Marquis of Salisbury, embodying the conditions upon which he is endeavouring to come to an understanding with the other Plenipotentiaries, and very urgently pressed his Highness to authorize its acceptance in Conference, pointing out how much was omitted of what he had regarded as inacceptable in the first proposals.

I have noted in the margin the substance of his remarks as we went through the paper together.

He did not give me the impression of intending to make any determined objection to the additional territory to be made over to the Prince of Montenegro, admitting what

I said of the Porte, having no real interest in it, but denying that such an extensive cession could properly be demanded of the Porte on the basis of the *statu quo ante* in however general terms that expression was to be taken.

The only really important points upon which serious difficulty seems likely to be encountered are those relating to the Valis, to the International Commission, and to the formation of a militia.

He could not, he said, consent by any written official document to subordinate the authority of the Sovereign in the selection of the Governor in his dominions to the approval of Foreign Powers; but, at the same time, with the view of coming to an understanding with us, it might be possible to promise confidentially that the names of the proposed Valis should be unofficially communicated to us before their nomination.

I reminded his Highness that in the case of the Lebanon this engagement had been taken in a perfectly formal manner.

To the period of five years, for which it was proposed to fix the appointments of the Governors-General, he objected, as restricting the still more permanent character of the appointment of public functionaries established by the Constitution.

I said they would have no security of tenure under the clause of the Constitution authorizing the Government to dismiss them if they thought it indispensable.

He said that it was never intended that such dismissals should take place at the mere caprice of the Government, that in the regulations to be framed in reference to their appointments, care would be taken to provide against this by providing that their case should be formally inquired into; but it would be impossible to admit that no Governor should be recalled except upon a legal conviction.

Mere incompetence was not a crime, nor was bodily or mental illness, but these and other equally sufficient causes might make the removal of a Governor indispensable, which would be impossible if the proposals of the Plenipotentiaries were assented to.

I do not imagine that it will be difficult to agree upon an arrangement which shall guarantee the Governors against arbitrary removal during a fixed period, without the inconvenience of rendering it dependent upon a legal conviction.

I should have stated that the paper alluded to was communicated to Midhat Pasha as one to which it was hoped to obtain the general consent of the Plenipotentiaries, but not as being already agreed to by them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

P.S. *January 9.*—I inclose a confidential report from Mr. Sandison of a conversation upon this subject with the Grand Vizier this afternoon.

H. E.

Inclosure 1 in No. 221.

Midhat Pasha's Observations.	*Précis of Conditions.*
	Monténégro.
Attaches no great importance to this, and thinks that though giving more than could be expected on the basis of the *status quo*, the discussion of this proposal should be reserved to the last.	RECTIFICATION des frontières du Monténégro, avec annexion des Banyani, Piva, avec Niksich, Drobniak, une partie de Chiranzi, le district de Kolachine, les Kutchi Drekalovitchi, les Kutchi Krajni, les Vassoïévitchi, de la Zievna au Lim, les Maly et Vely Brdo, Spouze, et Jabliak.
Made no observation.	Commission Internationale de Délimitation *ad hoc*.
Ditto.	Liberté de navigation sur la Boyana.
	Serbie.
Made much difficulty, insisting upon importance of Little Zvornik, but finished by admitting that the point might be referred to a Commission, as had at one time been contemplated by Aali Pasha.	*Statu quo ante bellum* pour la Serbie avec règlement des difficultés de limites du côté de la Bosnie par une Commission Arbitrale, conformément au Hatti-Chérif de 1833.

Midhat Pasha's Observations.	*Précis of Conditions.*
	Pour les Deux Principautés.
No difficulty made. Is ready at once to send back all Servian prisoners.	Evacuation par les troupes Ottomanes et par les troupes Princières du territoire en dehors des limites fixées, échange de prisonniers de guerre, et amnistie aux sujets employés au service ennemi.
	Bosnie, Herzégovine, et Bulgarie.
Objected strongly to the five years' terms impairing the stability proposed to be given to Governors-General, but finally considered that it might be managed. No Protocol or written engagement would be signed allowing the Powers to control the the choice of Governors-General, but he would engage that they should be consulted.	Les Gouverneurs-Généraux des provinces doivent être nommés pour cinq ans par la Porte, avec l'assentiment des Puissances.
No objections of any importance.	Subdivision des provinces en sandjaks avec des Mutessarifs nommés par la Porte sur la proposition des Valis pour un terme fixe, et en cantons (nahiés, mudirliks), de 5,000 à 10,000 habitants, avec des autorités cantonales librement élus par la population dans chaque commune, et compétents pour toutes les questions touchant les intérêts du canton, et particulièrement la répartition et la perception des impôts.
No objections mentioned.	Assemblées Provinciales élues pour un terme de quatre ans par les Conseils Cantonaux. Ils établiront le Budget de la Province, répartiront les impôts, et nommeront les Conseils Administratifs Provinciaux, dont les Valis devront prendre l'avis dans les cas dépassant l'exécution pure et simple des dispositions légales et règlementaires, et sur lesquelles ils pourront entrer en communication avec la Sublime Porte.
Only exception made refers to fishing dues, which he says could scarcely be otherwise collected.	Amélioration de l'assiette des impôts; les Assemblées Provinciales et les Conseils Cantonaux auront la répartition et la perception des contributions, sauf les Douanes, postes et télégraphes, les taxes sur le tabac et spiritueux et la régie.
Yes, in districts which have suffered.	Abolition complète du fermage.
Will be taken into consideration.	Remise des arriérés des impôts.
Yes.	Fixation du budget des provinces chaque cinq ans sur la moyenne des revenus. Une partie sera affectée au paiement de la Dette Publique, et aux besoins du Gouvernement centrale, et le reste à ceux des provinces.
	Réorganisation de la justice dans le sens d'une plus grande indépendance du Magistrat. Nomination des juges des Tribunaux Civils et Criminels par les Valis avec l'assentiment du Conseil Administratif, et des membres de la Cour d'Appel par la Porte sur la proposition

Midhat Pasha's Observations.	*Précis of Conditions.*
	des Valis. Publicité des séances et enquête judiciaire obligatoires. Juridiction exclusive des autorités ecclésiastiques pour les causes spéciales des différentes confessions.
This was abolished by the law of the Tanzimat at the invitation of the Powers to restrain the irresponsible authority of the ecclesiastics, which gave rise to much abuse and oppression.	Entière liberté de culte. Entretien du clergé et des établissements religieux et d'instruction publique par les communautés elles-mêmes. Garantie contre les conversions forcées.
Yes.	Usage de la langue du pays dans les Tribunaux et l'Administration également avec le Turc.
	Défense absolu des troupes irrégulières. Formation d'une milice et d'une gendarmerie de Chrétiens et de Musulmans, proportionnellement à la population, avec des officiers subalternes nommés par les Gouverneurs Généraux.
Requires to be put into a practicable form.	Interdiction de la colonisation des Circassiens. Amnistie générale.
Yes. Gendarmerie, yes. Militia, doubtful, rather no.	
Yes, as regards introduction of Colonies, but not as preventing relations of those now here from joining them. Will not sign engagement to that effect. Yes.	Amélioration du sort des laboureurs et des fermiers en Bosnie et en Herzégovine. Distribution des terrains de l'Etat. Facilités pour le rapatriement des émigrés.
No.	Le système électif pour la Bosnie sera remplacé provisoirement par le contrôle de la Commission.
	Mise en vigueur de ces dispositions dans un terme fixe de trois mois.
	Commissions de Contrôle.
Cannot officially accept such a Commission, but one may perhaps be indirectly arrived at. The Porte might name a Commission, and the Embassies might send Agents, as was done in the case of Mr. Baring.	Deux Commissions seront nommées par les Puissances Garantes pour contrôler l'exécution des réformes proposées par les Puissances. Elles aideront les autorités Ottomanes à découvrir les auteurs des massacres et excès, assureront la punition des coupables, et prendront part à la révision des sentences des personnes condamnées par les Commissions Extraordinaires et les autorités administratives. Elles veilleront à la restitution des armes distribuées par l'Etat, jugeront s'il est nécessaire de prohiber le port des armes, et prendront des mesures effectives pour venir en aide à la population éprouvée et assurer la complète sécurité des habitants au moyen d'une gendarmerie spéciale organisée avec le concours d'officiers et de sous-officiers Européens. Les Commissions surveilleront en général l'exécution des règlements, le fonctionnement de l'administration et de la justice, et les élections.
Not admitted. All acts of clemency must come from the Porte and the Sultan.	

Inclosure 2 in No. 221.

Mr. Sandison to Sir H. Elliot.

(Confidential.)

Sir, *Pera, January 9, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report that, in the interview which I had with the Grand Vizier to-day, I found his Highness still very favourably impressed with all that your Excellency told him yesterday, in submitting confidentially for his consideration the modified proposals for the conclusion of peace.

In conformity with your instructions, I did not fail to impress his Highness with the importance you continued to attach to the acceptance of those proposals by the Porte, which, should they even be rejected by Russia, would still, I said, place Turkey in a favourable and advantageous position towards the other European Governments.

Bearing in mind your Excellency's idea that a friendly action brought to bear upon the Porte, independently of what takes place at the Conferences, might lead to important results, I felt no hesitation in telling the Grand Vizier that a great deal, if not everything, depended upon him, and that, such being the case, you fully relied upon his earnest exertions to bring the pending negotiations to a speedy and satisfactory solution, by adopting the proposals in question, which in reality had been considerably reduced in many important respects, as compared with those proposed by the Conference and rejected by the Turkish Plenipotentiaries as being inadmissible.

To use his own words, "the pill," which a few days ago he found "much too big, not only for his throat, but for his mouth," had now been reduced to reasonable proportions; and he ought, therefore, I ventured to add, hesitate no longer in accepting it as it stood.

His Highness stated, in reply, that his position had become a very difficult one indeed; and that, whilst he received messages from the Sultan that he must be mindful of his sovereign rights in connection with the concessions which are demanded, he could hardly venture, on the other hand, to go against the current of public opinion, which was clamouring out for war and other sacrifices, rather than submit to the humiliation and the future political dangers which would be in store for Turkey if she accepted the proposals of the Conference. I begged to remind his Highness that there was in reality no public opinion strong enough in the country which could deter a Grand Vizier, much less himself, from carrying out the policy he had determined upon, and that, under all circumstances, you would still look forward to his active support in favour of the proposals you advocated in the general interest.

Though his Highness said he could not well lose sight of the Treaty of Paris, of the Constitution, and of the English bases of peace, in discussing the proposals confidentially with Lord Salisbury and M. de Chaudordy, it is gratifying to say that he expressed great hopes and a sincere wish of coming to a satisfactory understanding with their Excellencies. This, he continued, would then be a "fait accompli," of which he was prepared to assume the responsibility towards his colleagues and the country. As for the English bases, they were, he said, perfectly acceptable and that he should never feel any hesitation in adopting them fully.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. SANDISON.

No. 222.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 18.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January 11, 1877.*

WITH reference to Colonel Mansfield's despatches, reporting the irritation felt at Bucharest at expressions in the new Turkish Constitution, I have the honour to inclose a copy of the protest which Prince Ghika, the Roumanian Agent, has been instructed to make to the Porte, and to communicate to the Representatives of the Guaranteeing Powers.

Colonel Mansfield telegraphed to me that it would be desirable for the Porte to delay its answer, but the reply herewith inclosed had at once been returned to Prince Ghika.

It contains, however, nothing of an irritating nature, although Prince Ghika is not satisfied with it, and desires the Porte to add that it disclaims all intention of intimating the Danubian Principalities as forming an integral part of the Ottoman Empire.

It has been repeatedly affirmed in Treaties and other international Acts, that the Principalities do form a part of the Empire, and it is as such that they are entitled to

the guarantees secured to Turkey, and it is doubtful whether the Porte will consent in plain terms to disavow the connection, but I have advised the adoption of a form of words which may soothe the susceptibilities of the Roumanian Government.

Safvet Pasha assures me that there was not the slightest intention of altering in any respect the position of the vassal States towards the Sultan, and that the Porte will do what it can to remove any such impression.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 222.

M. Jonesco to Prince Ghika.

(Télégraphique.)

J'AI reçu votre télégramme du 1er Janvier, par lequel vous me communiquez la déclaration de son Excellence Safvet Pacha sur le sens et la portée de l'Article 7 de la Constitution Ottomane.

Cette déclaration a produit une pénible impression sur le Gouvernement de son Altesse le Prince Charles.

Les Capitulations des Princes Roumains avec les Sultans Ottomans ont établi entre la Sublime Porte et les Principautés Roumaines des rapports bien définis, qui n'ont en rien altéré leur position d'Etat Souverain. L'existence légale de ces rapports a été consacrée par le Traité et la Convention de Paris. Ces Capitulations font aujourd'hui partie du droit public Européen.

C'est en vertu de ces droits que la Roumanie a fait, depuis vingt ans, différents actes politiques et de souveraineté nationale reconnus par les Puissances Garantes et la Sublime Porte elle-même.

Quelque transformation que le Gouvernement Ottoman introduise dans son régime intérieur par la Charte Constitutionnelle, celle-ci ne saurait absorber notre individualité politique, assurée par nos Capitulations et les Traités existants. La charte octroyée par Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan à ses sujets ne peut donc nullement toucher aux relations établies par ces actes internationaux.

L'affirmation de son Excellence Safvet Pacha que la Roumanie est une des Provinces privilégiées de l'Empire est donc de nature à porter la plus grave atteinte à nos droits séculaires.

Notre pays a toujours formé un état distinct des provinces et possessions de la Turquie, et notre Souverain ne peut être assimilé à un chef de Province Ottomane.

Le Gouvernement de son Altesse le Prince Charles accomplit un devoir impérieux en déclarant comme nulles et non avenues les dispositions de la Charte Ottomane en tout ce qui concerne la Roumanie et en protestant de la manière la plus formelle contre la violation de nos droits garantis par les Traités.

La responsabilité et les conséquences d'une violation aussi flagrante retombe entièrement sur le Gouvernement Ottoman, qui vient de rompre des liens que les Roumains ont toujours su respecter.

Le Gouvernement de son Altesse le Prince Charles, fort de son bon droit, et confiant dans les sentiments de justice de l'Europe, espère que les Puissances Garantes aviseront à faire respecter les droits de la nation Roumaine.

Je vous autorise à remettre copie de cette protestation entre les mains de son Excellence Safvet Pacha, ainsi qu'à MM. les Représentants des Puissances Garantes.

Inclosure 2 in No. 222.

Safvet Pasha to Prince Ghika.

January 7, 1877.

CERTAINES expressions employées dans la Constitution Ottomane paraissant avoir été interprétées dans un sens erroné, nous croyons nécessaire de vous déclarer que la Sublime Porte n'a jamais eu l'intention de porter atteinte directement ou indirectement à la situation des Principautés-Unies telle qu'elle résulte des Traités.

La Constitution n'étant pas un Acte international pouvant avoir pour effet de modifier les Traités ni d'altérer les conditions d'existence politique d'aucun des pays qui font partie intégrante de l'Empire Ottoman, il suffit que la Sublime Porte affirme que la situation des Principautés-Unies reste ce qu'elle était avant la Constitution pour que le Gouvernement de son Altesse le Prince Charles soit entièrement édifié et rassuré à cet égard.

No. 223.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 10. Confidential.)
Constantinople, January 11, 1877.

My Lord,

IN case your Lordship should deem it advisable to publish Mr. Baring's reports of the trial of the persons arraigned for participation in the massacres in Bulgaria, I would beg leave to suggest that those relating to the deliberations of the Commission upon the sentences to be passed should be considered as confidential, so far as the opinions of the individual members are concerned. The deliberations were held with closed doors, and their publication might injure some of the members of the Commission who took part in them.

Mr. Baring's despatches to which I more particularly allude at present, are dated the 20th and 29th of December, and were inclosed in my No. 2 and No. 10 of the 1st and 4th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 224.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 23. Confidential.)
Constantinople, January 11, 1877.

My Lord,

I TOOK advantage of the audience granted to me yesterday by the Sultan to deliver the Queen's letter, to impress earnestly on His Majesty the necessity of accepting without further delay the proposals unanimously submitted to the Porte by the European Powers.

I represented that, through the exertions of the Marquis of Salisbury, several of the points which His Majesty's Government had considered objectionable, had been so materially modified that there is no true friend of Turkey who would not now deplore it if she were to reject the proposals, and bring upon herself the consequences which must result from such an act.

The conversation turned almost entirely upon the proposed International Commission, respecting which the Sultan said that if it were only a question of having an English Commissioner, or even English and French Commissioners, he would not, for his part, hesitate for a moment to agree to it; but there were other Governments which he could not regard as being inspired by the same interest in his Empire as he knew to be felt by that of Her Majesty.

His Majesty asked me how it was proposed to constitute the Commission, wishing, I imagine, to be informed whether it was to be formed without any Turkish member being upon it, but I was not in a position to give him the information he wanted.

I left the Sultan with a decided impression that there will be no insuperable objection on his part to the appointment, for a limited period, of a Commission with an Ottoman Member upon it, provided it is not to be invested with powers incompatible with the independence of the Porte.

His Majesty, as well as the Turkish Plenipotentiaries, are still uninformed as to any change or modification having been made in the original proposals drawn up at the preliminary meetings of the foreign Representatives, and submitted to the acceptance of the Porte, and they have at present to be satisfied with being told that they are materially reduced.

They have learnt from their Representatives abroad, and from the public newspapers, that such is the case, but they have not yet been put in a position to discuss anything but the original project.

Although the Sultan shows much confidence in Her Majesty's Government, and a wish to be guided by their advice, it is to be remembered that he has yet assumed but little authority over his Ministers, with whom the decision of the Porte will in reality rest; but we may, I think, calculate that any concessions consented to by them will at least meet with no opposition from the Sultan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 225.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 25.)
Constantinople, January 11, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of two despatches from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adrianople, reporting the promulgation of the Constitution, and the elections for the representation of the Province in the new Chamber.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 225.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Sir H. Elliot.

Adrianople, December 26, 1876.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the Turkish Constitution was promulgated in this city late on Saturday last. The new era was celebrated by salvos of artillery and the illumination of the mosques.

Immediately on the receipt of the intelligence by telegraph from Constantinople (a translation of which I beg leave to inclose), the Governor-General sent for the different religious chiefs and informed them of the change from an absolute to a constitutional Government, and requested them to make it known to their communities.

The general public, however, unable as yet to realize the advantages of their new position, made no attempt at demonstrations of contentment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. HUTTON DUPUIS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 225.

Vizirial Letter addressed to the Governor-General of Adrianople.

(Traduction.)
Le $\frac{11}{23}$ Décembre, 1876.

SA Majesté Impériale le Sultan aussitôt après son avènement au trône ayant manifesté son désir dans un Hatt pour que le Gouvernement de l'Etat soit fondé par des lois utiles:—

Pour la discussion de cette affaire importante il a été constitué une Commission à la Porte composée des Ministres, Oulemas, et autres hauts fonctionnaires de l'Etat, qui, ayant terminé leurs travaux aujourd'hui Samedi, en présence des Ministres, des Oulemas, et Mouchirs, et au milieu d'une foule nombreuse, a été donné lecture en grande solennité du Hatt Impérial qui sanctionne la susdite loi fondamentale.

Aujourd'hui par conséquent a été donné fin au Gouvernement absolu par la proclamation de la Constitution, qui a été toujours dictée par la Loi Sainte et la philosophie.

Ce changement, qui ratifie aux Musulmans les droits civils de la patrie et de la nation conformément aux lois antérieures, assure en même temps la liberté individuelle, la fraternité et l'égalité parmi les peuples Ottomans. C'est avec la plus grande joie donc que nous communiquons dans tout l'Etat cette ère célèbre de la liberté, pour laquelle nous avons exprimé nos sincères remercîments à Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan.

Vous êtes prié, Excellence, de vouloir bien faire part de cet acte par 101 coups de canon, de permettre pour que des illuminations soient faites, et expédier par le courrier les lettres de remercîment qui vous seront remises.

Inclosure 3 in No. 225.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Sir H. Elliot.

Adrianople, January 5, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 26th ultimo, I have the honour to acquaint your Excellency that several important and influential deputations from the

different communities, having at their heads their spiritual Chiefs, waited yesterday on the Governor-General to express their contentment and satisfaction at the promulgation of the Turkish Constitution. The deputations were attended by crowds of people of all nationalities, who testified their feelings of gratitude for the new order of things, and sympathy for the Government, under present difficulties, by shouting "Vive le Sultan," "La Constitution," and "Midhat Pasha."

Numerous memorials in acknowledgment of the benefits received are also being prepared for presentation to the Central Government.

I may also inform your Excellency that the elections for the representation of this Province in the new Chamber were concluded yesterday, and that eight deputies have been chosen, whose names are:—

Turkish Deputies, Rasim Bey, Haggi Sherif Bey, Husni Bey, Rifaat Effendi.
Greek Deputies, Dimitri Gheritoglu, Athenishotus.
Armenian Deputy, Ruspen Zusioglu.
Bulgarian Deputy, Kara Michael Oglu.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. HUTTON DUPUIS.

No. 226.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 26.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 11, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of two further despatches from Mr. Baring, one reporting the sentence passed upon Achmet Tchaoush, of Kara Boulak, and the other giving some information respecting the progress of the work of relief among the Bulgarians by the Turkish Commission at Philippopoli, which is working very cordially with Mr. Stoney, the Agent of the Central Relief Committee.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 226.

Mr. Baring to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Philippopolis, January 4, 1877.*

IN my despatch of the 29th ultimo I had the honour to inform your Excellency that the Commission had come to an important decision with respect to the case of Achmet Tchaoush, of Kara Boulak, and that judgment had been deferred till after the Bairam. I also stated that I gathered from Sadoullah Bey's remarks to me that he regretted this decision and wished to see it modified.

Owing to the illness of the President no further sitting was held till the 2nd instant.

On that day the Commission met to reconsider the case of Achmet Tchaoush and Sadoullah Bey commenced by proposing that a decision should be come to as to whether the prisoner was a ringleader of the same standing as Achmet Agha; his Excellency, of course, making this proposal in order to extricate himself from the dilemma in which he was placed by the decision of the 26th ultimo.

Ikindes Effendi said that perhaps Achmet Tchaoush could not be placed quite in the same category as Achmet Agha, who was a Government officer, and that, therefore, his punishment might be mitigated.

Pertew Effendi held that he could only be made responsible for the acts of his own hand.

The President and Salim Effendi also said that he should only be punished for his own acts.

Yovantcho Effendi strongly opposed these views, saying that it was quite impossible to prove exactly what crimes were committed by every individual Bashi-Bazouk, and that the law made no distinction between the leaders of a rebellious mob.

The following question was then put: "Was Achmet Tchaoush, of Kara Boulak, a leader of the same class as Achmet Agha?"

The answer was in the negative, Salim Effendi adding that he was not convinced

that Achmet Tchaoush had been a leader at all, and Yovantcho Effendi saying that though he could not be classed with Achmet Agha, yet he was responsible for all acts committed at Batak.

The question of what Article of the Code was applicable to the case was then taken into consideration.

Pertew Effendi said that he considered that the prisoner had only been guilty of stealing a few sheep.

Ikiades Effendi said that he was punishable under Articles 56 and 57 of the Code, but that the punishment might be mitigated under Article 172.

A long discussion arose upon the application of the law, and the sitting was adjourned until the next day, when at last the following decision was carried and signed:—

"Considering that that portion of Article 57 which relates to actual ringleaders cannot be said properly to apply to Achmet Tchaoush, but considering that he was present among the Bashi-Bazouks who separated a number of men from the crowd (outside the village), who were subsequently massacred at the church, his acts must be judged in accordance with the latter part of Article 57, in virtue of which he should be condemned to hard labour for life."

I am firmly convinced that if the Commission had proceeded to consider the sentence passed on this man immediately after its decision of the 26th ultimo, he would have been condemned to death. After this date the attitude of the Mussulman members became even more openly favourable to the prisoners than it had been before; and, moreover, the Christian members had been weakened by the withdrawal of Wassa Effendi, who has been replaced by Abro Effendi, who confines himself to saying "Amen" to anything and everything which the Turkish members may think fit to advance.

Achmet Tchaoush richly deserved to suffer the extreme penalty of the law; for the evidence proves as plainly as possible that he was one of the principal actors in the frightful massacre which took place at the church on the Tuesday.

Some time ago I know it was the intention of the President to sentence him to death, and it is only of late that his Excellency's sentiments have undergone such a violent change.

Ismail Bey, who has taken no part in the sittings since he has been here, left for Constantinople this morning. He has been endeavouring to get the Bulgarians to send an address to the Grand Vizier, thanking him for the promulgation of the Constitution, and adding some expression to the effect that they view with disapproval the proposals of the Conference.

An address of this nature having already been sent by the Greeks, it was hoped that some of the Bulgarians at any rate would follow their example; but the latter, from all I can hear, have not acceded to Ismail Bey's suggestion.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER BARING.

Inclosure 2 in No. 226.

Mr. Baring to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Philippopolis, January 5, 1877.*

MR. STONEY, who returned from a tour through some of the burnt villages a short time ago, reports that on the whole the work undertaken by the Commission is progressing fairly well.

At Krastovo, up to the 14th ultimo, only 14 houses were still unbuilt out of 70 which had been burnt.

At Leshnick, up to the 19th ultimo, 84 houses had been built out of 119 burnt.

At Ouzoun Gheren, up to the 24th ultimo, 80 had been built out of 110.

At Ayvadjik, up to the 13th ultimo, 60 had been built out of 66.

At Sane Gueul 40 had been finished out of 52 burnt, the proprietors, however, providing most of the timber.

At Zinzirli, out of 177 houses, only 12 were rebuilt.

At Tcheumlek Yeni-keui (Novo Selo) Mr. Story also says that the work is progressing favourably.

On the other hand, at Eureli, a village of 130 houses, which was totally destroyed,

only 50 huts had been commenced up to the 13th ultimo, and the condition of the people is spoken of as being very miserable.

At Popnitza, where 29 houses were burnt out of 133, no building had been done.

I find that this place was omitted from the list of burnt villages given in my report.

At Streldja little had been done, and at Prassadum Dervent (Klissoura), up to the 16th ultimo, but small progress had been made, owing to the obstinacy of the Turkish "Meemour."

On my speaking to Sadoullah Bey about this latter place, he said that a Bulgarian named Kirico, who had been employed at Zindzirli, should be sent there.

In the four quarters of the Turkish Yourouk-Mahallesi, real progress had only been made in one of them, viz., at Ouroutchlou, where 22 houses had been partly constructed out of 27 burnt.

In the other three quarters, out of 77 houses burnt, only 6 had been finished and 6 commenced.

I hear from all those who are engaged in the work of relief, that none of the villagers are now without some sort of shelter.

The Commission is now distributing a number of "arabas" among the villagers, and a certain quantity of cattle has also been given.

It has been found to be better and cheaper to let the villagers find the oxen themselves, and then give them the money to pay for them.

The Commission has also distributed a number of blankets and quilts.

Some time ago 100,000 piastres in Caimé were handed to the "Naib" of Tatar-Bazardjik for the relief of his district.

I regret to say that but little has been done in the way of restoring the property stolen during the disturbances, as great difficulties are encountered at every turn: *e.g.*, a certain Ismail Effendi, who appears to be an honest and well-intentioned man, was sent to Isladi to recover cattle, &c.; the authorities of the place, however, issued a notice that any man who claimed cattle and who failed to establish his claim would be punished. This, of course, had the effect of preventing any Bulgarian from coming forward and demanding the restitution of what he had lost.

Ismail Effendi, seeing he was powerless, accordingly left, came to Philippopolis, and reported what had happened. He has now been sent back, but I have not heard the result of his mission.

The Turks of Islodi have always been notorious for their lawlessness, and I fear they will succed in thwarting his good intentions.

I regret to say that of late attempts have been made to throw discredit on the work of the different English relief Committees by spreading rumours that their real object was proselytism.

The most absurd stories have been afloat, but it is not easy to trace their origin.

The most absurd stories have been afloat, but it is not easy to trace their origin.

Dr. Tchamakow and other leading Bulgarians have spoken to me on this subject, and have expressed their indignation that such calumnies should have been allowed to circulate.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER BARING.

No. 227.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 28.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 12, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that on the 9th instant three Turkish ironclads were dispatched from hence to Batoum, to undertake the defence of that harbour, for which purpose a considerable number of torpedoes will be employed, under the superintendence of an officer of the Turkish navy, who was formerly in Her Majesty's service.

Hobart Pasha proceeded last week in a fast despatch vessel, to examine the defences of Bourgas and the harbours on the north-western shore of the Black Sea, as far as the Sulina mouth of the Danube.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 228.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 29.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 12, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship the inclosed reports which I have received from Colonel Lennox, Military Attaché to this Embassy, on military affairs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 228.

Colonel Lennox to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Constantinople, January 11, 1877.*

I DO not profess that I have been already able to get into the way of gathering much information relative to the Turkish army; but I have heard as follows:—

The cavalry and artillery of the 5th and 6th Army-Corps (viz., those with their head-quarters at Damascus and Bagdad) are on the march for the probable theatre of war viâ Diarbekir.

I am also informed that the number of battalions about the Danube has been increased to 90. Although some of the battalions of Redifs are said to be up to full strength (800), yet as many of them (those from Herzegovina and Albania, for instance), are very weak, I understand that 600 may be taken as the mean strength per battalion which would give 54,000 men between Tultsha, Warna, Schumna, Rustchuk and Nikopoli. There are said to be also 40 battalions about Widin.

Troops are continually passing through this, and many, it is said, have been forwarded to Batoum.

Although the Turkish organization only provides for bans of Redifs, yet it is stated that the formation of a third ban of 120 battalions (24 battalions in each of the first five Army-Corps) was commenced last year, and that now it has been decided to form a fourth ban of Redifs.

The want of officers is said to be greatly felt. This must evidently be the case, as the establishment of officers was only for—

	Battalions.
The Line	181
And for the battalions of the first ban of Redifs	144
Officers existed for	325
There were some weak cadres for the battalions of the second ban of Redifs.	144
But none for the third ban of Redifs..	120
Or for the fourth ban of Redifs	120
Now battalions to be officered	384
Making the total to be officered	709

I understand that all available young men in the war schools have been commissioned, and also that a very large number of sergeants have been promoted; but that still there is a great deficiency of officers. For this reason, among others, I am told that it is proposed to adopt, in principle, the battalion of 4 companies of 200 men each, instead of 8 companies of 100 men each. It is said "in principle," for it is, I believe, admitted that many of the captains will not be capable of commanding a unit of 200 men.

As regards small arms, quantities of Henry-Martini rifles are arriving, though there is said to have been no lack of arms in possession of the Government for any war.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM LENNOX, *Colonel, R.E., Military Attaché.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 228.

Colonel Lennox to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Constantinople, January* 11, 1877.

MR. CECIL HENRY COOK, son of the Rev. J. Cook, of Peopliton, Pershore, Worcestershire, is out here as one of the two officers of the "League to aid the Sick and Wounded Soldiers on the Battle Field," the Secretary of which Society is Mr. C. Henry, Richmond Villa, Dovercourt, Harwich. Mr. Cook was dressed, when first I saw him, in an undress uniform resembling that of the Royal Artillery so nearly that I could not detect any difference. The next time I saw him, he had added some description of red-cross badge on his arm.

Mr. Cook informs me that he was an officer in the 1st Life Guards for three months, about April 1873, under Colonel Keith Fraser, and that, after that, he was attached to the 88th Connaught Rangers under Colonel Hughes at Colchester for six months.

I suggest that inquiries should be made as to the accuracy of the above statements.

Mr. Cook says he is an officer of the Armed Constabulary of New Zealand, to which Colony he went at the beginning of 1874, and that there he was Aide-de-camp to the Governor, the Marquis of Normanby. He states that the uniform he wears is that of the Armed Constabulary of New Zealand, and persists that Lord Normanby has given permission to the officers of that corps to wear gold lace.

I suggest that this should also be inquired into.

The case of Mr. Cook leads me to call attention to the regulations about officers wearing uniform. By the Queen's Regulations (section 13, paragraphs 7 and 8), officers would appear to be allowed to wear their uniforms whenever they choose. It is probably not contemplated that they should wear them out of their districts, except at Court, but I cannot see any restriction laid down; and I suggest that it would be advisable to add to the Queen's Regulations, section 13, paragraph 18, words to the effect that officers in foreign countries are not to wear their uniforms without the permission of Her Majesty's Representatives.

Mr. Cook informed me that there was another officer in this country, viz., Mr. C. Hughes, who also wore the uniform resembling that of the Royal Artillery. The "League in Aid," referred to previously only employs two officers, and they both belong to the Armed Constabulary of New Zealand. I suggest that this League be inquired into.

Several British officers, and persons who wish to be taken for British officers, have lately been out to this country, and it would appear to be advisable to ascertain what powers there are to prevent persons wearing uniforms which may be taken for those of the British army.

As desired by your Excellency, I requested Mr. Cook to cease to wear his uniform, and he has, I am glad to say, done so, but he asked me whether there was any power to prevent persons wearing any uniforms they chose. I could only suggest that a person doing so would be liable to three months' imprisonment as a rogue and a vagabond, but I am not certain whether this view is correct. I hope that the subject may be considered, and some means provided by which persons may be punished for wearing uniforms improperly, if no such means now exist.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM LENNOX, *Colonel, R.E.,*
Military Attaché.

Inclosure 3 in No. 228.

Colonel Lennox to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Constantinople, January* 11, 1877.

AS persons professing to be officers in Her Majesty's service often arrive here, and as the number is likely to increase, it would be advisable that Army Lists (with index) and also Navy Lists should be supplied twice a year at least.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM LENNOX, *Colonel, R.E.*
Military Attaché.

No. 229.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 30.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 12, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the inclosed despatch from Mr. Consul Reade, together with his report upon the inquiry by the Turkish Commission into the conduct of Shefket Pasha on the repression of the insurrection at Boyadji-Keui in last May.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 229.

Consul Reade to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Constantinople, January* 4, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report that, conformably with your Excellency's instructions of the 6th December, 1876, I proceeded to the Slimnia Caza, in which the village of Bazardjik is situated, and was present during the whole inquiry of the Commission sent by the Porte to investigate what took place there in May, 1876, and respecting which the conduct of Shefket Pasha has been so much impugned.

Shefket Pasha certainly accompanied the Commission, but was not present at any of its sittings except the last one at Yamboli.

When at Bazardjik I requested permission to put some very important questions to him through the President of the Commission, but failed; and at Yamboli the Commission did all in its power to prevent my interrogating him, and only gave way on my rising to retire and telegraph to your Excellency.

The Commission took down the depositions of most of those who were present at the Bazardjik disaster, or who could throw any light on the subject of its inquiry. There were, however, several persons at Bazardjik whom the Commission omitted to examine, and the importance of whose evidence was only apparent after our departure.

I took occasion to obtain information on many other matters beyond the affair of Bazardjik, which I brought to the knowledge of the Commission as they bore on the present state of the Caza, and which I induced the Commission to notice as far as lay in its power, and in recognition of which I received the inclosed addresses from the Christians of Slimnia and Yamboli.

I have now further the honour to inclose my report based on the evidence taken by the Commission.

No. 5 contains copy of a petition in the Bulgarian language, accompanied by lists of the damage done at Yamboli by the troops under Shefket Pasha on the 24th May, and which was presented to the Commission by the Christians of Yamboli on the 25th ultimo.

Having done my utmost to bring out the real truth on the subject of the inquiry, I trust that I shall meet with your Excellency's approval, and have, &c.,

(Signed) R. READE.

P.S.—Having also drawn up a brief history of what occurred in the Slimnia district in May last, I have also the honour to inclose it.

R. R.

Inclosure 2 in No. 229.

M. Poppovitch and others to Consul Reade.

M. le Consul, *Slivno, le* 16 *Décembre*, 1876.

NOUS Soussignés, au nom de la population Bulgare de la ville de Slivno, venons vous remercier de la sollicitude, de la sympathie, et de l'impartialité que vous venez de montrer dans votre mission extraordinaire d'enquête.

La population Bulgare de notre ville, ainsi que toute la nation Bulgare, ne peuvent rester indifférente à la compassion et aux sentiments d'équité que la nation Anglaise a témoignée à l'endroit des souffrances inouïes et des atrocités sans précédent dans

l'histoire ancienne et contemporaine ; les grands secours pécunières venus de la riche et noble Angleterre ont attiré de la part de certaines de milliers de veuves et d'orphelins Bulgares des bénédictions et des reconnaissances éternelles au grand et magnanime peuple Anglais.

Croyez nous, M. le Consul, que les sympathies que le Gouvernement Anglais, et surtout que la nation Anglaise, ont montré dernièrement envers la nation Bulgare, celle-ci n'oubliera jamais que son amélioration ou sa vie individuelle qu'elle va bientôt commencer à passer, est due en grande partie à la co-opération morale de la nation Anglaise.

Recevez, &c.
(Signé) PANAYOT G. POPPOVITCH,
(And 11 others in Bulgarian.)

Inclosure 3 in No. 229.

M. Ivanoff and others to Consul Reade.

M. le Consul, *Yamboli, le 25 Décembre*, 1876.

LES malheurs qui dernièrement ont frappé notre infortunée population ont eu dans l'Empire Anglais des retentissements sympathiques.

L'Angleterre Chrétienne par voie du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Gracieuse de la Reine, également pour le peuple généreux entier, s'est ému des souffrances d'une population Chrétienne.

Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté, dans sa grâce, vous a confié la mission, aussi pénible qu'ingrate, d'une enquête relativement aux tristes événements qui ont eu lieu dans notre ville et de ses environs.

Les habitants de Yamboli et de ses environs sont convaincu que par votre intelligence aussi bien que par votre expérience de votre long séjour dans l'Empire Ottoman, vous, M. le Consul, avez pu juger de la véracité des plaintes soumises à votre jugement.

N'étant pas à mésure de prouver autrement notre reconnaissance pour les efforts et les fatigues que vous, M. le Consul, avez supporté pour la cause de nos malheurs, nous vous apportons en guise de remercîment ces peu de lignes que nous vous prions de vouloir accepter comme un compte d'une dette envers Sa Majesté la Reine d'abord, comme envers tout le peuple Anglais et personnellement envers vous-même, M. le Consul.

Les mains jointes, nous vous prions de bien vouloir intervenir auprès du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine que dans sa grâce elle veuille ne pas oublier les malheurs de notre population, mais bien de laisser passer en notre faveur un petit peu de sa puissance pour que dans l'avenir des pareilles calamités ne nous atteignent plus.

Nous avons, &c.
Les habitants très reconnaissants de la ville de Yamboli,
(Signé) D. IVANOFF.
(And 20 others in Bulgarian.)

Inclosure 4 in No. 229.

Report of the British Delegate to the Commission of Inquiry into the Occurrences which took place at Boyadjik in May 1876, and respecting the conduct of Shefket Pasha.

Statement of Hashim Effendi and the Mussulman Zaptichs and Villagers, and others.

ON Friday, the 26th May, 1876, the Mussulman villagers of Bazardjik, seeing the Christians armed, half with their ordinary firelocks, and half with reaping hooks and sticks, and that they were keeping guard on the borders of the village, considered that they were in revolt, and the same evening despatched a certain Regeb to Slimnia to inform the authorities thereof.

The Mutessarif, Haidar Bey, on the following day telegraphed to Hashim Effendi, Kaïmakam of Yamboli, the Government official nearest to Bazardjik, to ascertain and report to him the real state of things.

Next day, Sunday, the 28th, the Kaïmakam accordingly proceeded to Bazardjik, accompanied by three Zaptichs and eight Bashi-Bozuks.

On arriving near the village, seeing a number of men standing on some high ground on the borders of the village, he sent a Zaptich to call one or two of the principal villagers.

After some difficulty, two of them proceeded to the Kaïmakam, who says that he informed them that he had come by order of the Mutessarif of Slimnia to ascertain the real condition of the village, but that, notwithstanding this, they refused to allow him to enter, on which he returned to Yamboli, and telegraphed all this to the Mutessarif.

As Shefket Pasha was in Slimnia, the Mutessarif the same evening went to the General and showed him the telegram, when he, the General, at once decided to start for Bazardjik with his battalion of infantry, two mountain guns, and several hundred Bashi-Bazouks.

On arriving near the village next morning (the 29th May), seven of the villagers came out to meet him.

At this moment the General ordered Murad Agn, a Zaptich, and two others to enter the Mussulman quarter of the village, in order to protect Haj Emin Agn and the other Mussulmen.

The General then said that, hearing gunshots, he sent away the seven villagers that had come out to meet him, and marched his force up to the height on the borders of the village ; and, seeing a number of people collected about the church, he fired six shots at it, and then left with his regulars and two guns for Yamboli.

Statement of the Christian Villagers of Bazardjik.

On Thursday, the 25th of May last, five Circassians presented themselves suddenly at Bazardjik, and at once dispatched a man whom they met to summon to them some of the principal villagers.

The Tchorbadjy Grosé and Nicola Papassoglu, with one or two others, accordingly went to them and were peremptorily ordered to bring some horses to them.

From the bearing and menaces of the Circassians, this demand was necessarily complied with, and they went away.

Soon afterwards some neighbouring villagers, called Koofalli, and some Bashi-Bazouks from Yamboli, some of whose names were given, also presented themselves at the village, and sent for Nicola Papassoglu, from whom they demanded a considerable sum of money, and whom they menaced and treated very roughly.

Nicola's father was then brought, and was also very violently treated. Both were sent off to fetch the money that was demanded, the Bashi-Bazouks stating that they would return in the evening for the money, and who afterwards caught and violated a woman of the village and her daughter.

Having heard of the pillage of Yamboli on the previous day, the villagers got frightened, and the same evening Nicola went to Slimnia to obtain protection from the authorities.

On the following day the Mutessarif of Slimnia, Haidar Bey, telegraphed to Hashim Effendi, Kaïmakam of Yamboli, the nearest Government official, to proceed to Bazardjik, to ascertain the real state of affairs.

On Sunday, the 28th, Hashim Effendi accordingly left for Bazardjik, accompanied by some Zaptichs and from forty to fifty Bashi-Bazouks.

On arriving near the village, he sent forward two Zaptichs to tell them that he had been sent by the Mutessarif of Slimnia to ascertain the real state of the village.

The villagers, seeing from forty to fifty Bashi-Bazouks, asked the Zaptichs to beg the Kaïmakam to come into the village, but to leave the Bashi-Bazouks outside, as they had already suffered from several who, with Circassians, had been to the village.

The Zaptichs returned to the Kaïmakam, but seeing that the latter did not advance, a Bakal (who was afterwards killed by the Bashi-Bazouks) went to him and tried to persuade him, but in vain, as the whole party at once went back to Yamboli.

On the day following the 29th May, during the forenoon, the villagers, seeing a considerable force of regulars and Bashi-Bazouks before the village, sent seven of their number down to offer their respects and to convince the Commander of their loyalty.

Just as they had reached the General, Shefket Pasha, the latter ordered some Zaptichs to enter the Mussulman quarter of the village to protect the Mussulmans. Some Bashi-Bazouks were also seen to enter the same quarter.

Presently some firing was heard, when the General very roughly ordered the seven villagers to return to the village, as he was about to punish them.

Notwithstanding all their protestations of loyalty they were ordered off. The whole force then marched up to the height overlooking the village, when the General commenced battering the church with two guns, and the whole of the Bashi-Bazouks entered the village, and, with some of regulars, commenced plundering, massacring, and burning all around.

The firing that induced the General to attack the village was afterwards ascertained and explained by the villagers.

It appears that when the Zaptiehs were sent to protect the Mussulmans some Bashi-Bazouks managed to steal in after them and at once commenced firing on some Christians whom they saw, and then ran out of the village to let the General think that they had been fired on by the Christians.

After firing for some time the General went away with the regulars, leaving the Bashi-Bazouks in the village, who continued plundering, massacring, and burning the whole day.

STATISTICAL Account of Bazardjik, and Damage done.

Total number of males		404
Males over 20 years of age		227
Killed—		
Men	166	
Women	8	
Children	12	
Total	186	
Total number of houses		145
Destroyed		130

The number of women violated it was utterly impossible for me to ascertain correctly, as I have prevented them from avowing the fact. Six, however, were at last persuaded to inform me of their having been outraged, and they stated that the number was between 30 and 40. My poor informants were covering their faces and weeping all the time they were speaking to me, and they were all between 40 and 70 years of age.

The only priests of the village (two in number) were massacred.

The church was battered by Shefket Pasha, and then burnt by the Bashi-Bazouks.

Twenty thousand kilog. of cereals were carried off, and, as far as I could learn, about 450 oxen.

Remarks of the British Delegate.

The first and most important point is whether or no the villagers of Bazardjik were in revolt.

The Mussulmans state that they were, from their having suddenly armed themselves, half with firelocks and half with reaping-hooks and sticks.

The villagers do not deny that they were armed, and give the following motives for having done so:—

First. The visit, on the 25th of May, of the five Circassians, who robbed them of their horses, and treated them with great violence.

Secondly. The subsequent arrival of the Korfalli and the Yamboli Bashi-Bazouks, who also maltreated and robbed them, and violated two of their women.

Thirdly. Their knowledge of what had occurred at Yamboli on the 24th May, three days previously.

There was no evidence whatever that any emissaries or insurgents had been to the village, nor did the Mussulmans make any such assertion.

Even Shefket Pasha himself said that "six or seven" came out to meet him on his arrival at Bazardjik. Had they been in a state of revolt, their number being so small, this would hardly have been done.

Hashim Effendi said that they would not admit him, but the statement of the villagers was a very natural one, viz., that, from their experience of the few previous days, and knowing what had occurred at Yamboli, they begged him to leave the Bashi-Bazouks outside.

Hashim Effendi states that he had only eight Bashi-Bazouks with him; the villagers say that there were certainly forty or fifty.

Dr. Tuitman, a German residing at Yamboli, and who saw the Kaïmakam start for Bazardjik, stated to the Commission that "there were certainly upwards of twenty." This is neutral evidence.

Dado Guergy, a Christian of Bazardjik, stated before the Commission that when Shefket Pasha arrived, he did not trust his property for safety to any Christian, but to Topjy Ahmed Aga, one of the Mussulmans who had joined in saying that the Christians were in revolt. Had Ahmed Aja really thought so, would he have taken charge of the property of an insurgent?

Ahmed Aja admitted this, and also said (and was confirmed by the villagers), that he did his utmost in their favour, and saved those houses that were in his vicinity. Had he really thought that they were in revolt, he would not have dared to do this for the most obvious reasons.

If the villagers, therefore, are not to be believed, we must come to no other conclusion than that they had lost their reason, for to suppose that 227 men in such an exposed village as Bazardjik, and of whom only one-half, as the Turks admitted, were armed with the contemptible firelocks of the country, should have thought of opposing a General at the head of a battalion of infantry, two mountain guns, and several hundred Bashi-Bazouks, and who they knew were in their vicinity, is simply absurd.

The next question is the conduct of Shefket Pasha.

Let it be granted that these 200 villages were in revolt.

If the General with his force, as above stated, could not surround and take these few men prisoners, he was evidently not fit for the command. But he stated before the Commission that "he could have done so, and that he did not do so, from fear of greater bloodshed."

As the Bashi-Bazouks, therefore, were turned into the village, and with some of the regulars were allowed to massacre, violate, and plunder during the whole of the time he was standing on the height overlooking the village, the General was, beyond doubt, responsible for it all.

The same, minus the massacre, was done at Yamboli four days previously by the Bashi-Bazouks and troops of the General, and in his very presence, and which the Commission admitted to the British Delegate he was responsible for. Consequently, the same justly applies to his conduct at Bazardjik.

The General was, by the Commission (at the instance of the British Delegate), asked to produce his orders; he produced two telegrams, one from the Porte, and one from the Sidar Ekren, both were identical in tenor and spirit, enjoining the General to find out and "ecraser" (the word used) any insurgents that he might find in the district, but he was not ordered to do what was subsequently done by the troops under his command and in his presence, for which, beyond all doubt, he was strictly responsible.

(Signed) R. READE,
Her Majesty's Consul for the Vilayet of the Danube, and British Delegate to the Shefket Pasha Inquiry Commission.

Constantinople, January 4, 1877.

Inclosure 5 in No. 229.

Statement of what took place in the Caza of Slimnia in May, 1876.

THE Porte, hearing that insurgents had been found in some parts of the Balkans farther west, imagined that there might also be some in the Caza of Slimnia, and, therefore, ordered Shefket Pasha, who was at Adrianople, to proceed at once to the district with a battalion of regulars and two mountains guns to look for any insurgents that might be there, and to put them down (the word used to me by the Commission was "ecraser") with promptitude.

Instructions at the same time, and of the same tenor, were sent to the Mutessarif of Slimnia, and also to his subordinate, the Kaïmakam of Yamboli.

The Mutessarif, Haidar Bey, being a man of proper sentiments, treated the matter fairly and coolly, and thus, as he was Governor of the whole Caza, far greater disasters than what occurred were avoided.

But Hashim Effendi, Kaïmakam of Yamboli, must have interpreted his instructions far differently, for he really appears to have thought that he was called upon to get up a case, as he at once arrested several persons at Yamboli on the most absurd grounds, and when Shefket Pasha arrived and spoke to him on the subject, he gave him information which was followed by a general pillage of almost the whole Christian quarter, and the villages in the immediate vicinity, and when he was ordered to proceed

to Bazardjik, being still of the same spirit, he evidently thought he must get up a case against Bazardjik also, and, consequently, by his telegram to the Mutessarif, brought on the massacre there by the troops under Shefket Pasha, who seems to have sided more with Hashim Effendi than with Haidar Bey, the superior officer of the district.

Had the General been as moderate as the Mutessarif, and had he, as it was his duty to do, listened to him, all, most probably, would have gone well, but Haidar Bey was paralysed by the General's tone and spirit, and, being of a rank inferior to him, was evidently afraid of opposing him.

I must here observe that the instructions of Akif Pasha, Vali of Adrianople, and which were read before the Commission, were very good. Shefket Pasha saw these, and was, therefore, the more to blame.

Other villages between Bazardjik and Slimnia, which were visited by Shefket Pasha, were only saved by the intercession of the Bishop of Slimnia, who, not dreaming of what was to befall Bazardjik, had not proceeded there. The conduct of the Bishop was, from first to last, admirable.

(Signed) R. READE,
Her Majesty's Consul for the Vilayet of the Danube, and British Delegate to the Shefket Pasha Inquiry Commission.

Constantinople, January 4, 1877.

No. 230.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 8. Political.)
My Lord, *Bucharest, January* 11, 1877.

AN incident has taken place which will, no doubt, go the round of the newspapers with some exaggeration, and for this reason I report to your Lordship a circumstance which, otherwise, has but little importance.

The day before yesterday, the 9th instant, thirty Circassian colonists crossed the Danube to the Roumanian village of Calarasi; the latter is a few miles to the north of the river, and may be roughly stated to be opposite Silistria.

The detachment of Roumanian soldiers in the village, twenty in number, was maltreated, to the extent that the life of one of them is in serious danger, and some sheep and other articles were plundered from the peasants.

A panic among the inhabitants on the river, similar to that which took place some five weeks since, has begun, and the Government is reinforcing the military posts; the line of the Danube is, however, so extended that it would be impossible to guard against incursions from the Turkish side if the Mussulman population were to organize systematic raids of this nature.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 231.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 5. Political.)
My Lord, *Galatz, January* 12, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 4 of this series, dated 10th instant, notifying the arrival at Galatz of a contractor for supplies for the Russian army of the South, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the contractor therein alluded to has only undertaken the provisioning of one division of the army, about 12,000 men, and that at present, it seems, he is only prepared to enter into contracts contingent on the marching of the troops.

He has not yet returned to Galatz from Ibraïla.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PERCY SANDERSON.

No. 232.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 29. Most Confidential.)
My Lord, *Budu-Pesth, January* 12, 1877.

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram of yesterday on the ultimate understanding alleged by Count Schouvaloff to exist between Austria, Germany, and Russia, I have the honour to state that the Emperor observed to me to-day that nothing could be more satisfactory than the assurances which he receives of the Emperor Alexander's desire for the maintenance of peace; but His Majesty said he finds it difficult to reconcile these assurances with the expensive and active preparations which the Russian Government are making for war.

This language and the observations of Count Andrassy, which I report in another telegram of this date, do not appear to me consistent with such an understanding as Count Schouvaloff considers to exist between the Governments of Austria and Russia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 233.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 31. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Budu-Pesth, January* 12, 1877.

I AVAILED myself of an opportunity this morning to communicate to Count Andrassy the substance of your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, acquainting me with an answer which you had given to a suggestion mentioned to you by Odian Effendi, that the Constitution recently decreed for the Ottoman Empire, together with the new Provincial Administration to be drawn up, should be made a matter of international agreement between Turkey and the Powers, who would thus have a right to watch over its execution.

His Excellency expressed an opinion as to the expediency of adopting the scheme suggested by Odian Effendi, as a means of effecting an arrangement in the Conference; but he said if the Turkish Constitution could be carried out, which he does not believe probable, it would lead to a dissolution of the Empire. He considers its promulgation, at present, however, a master-stroke of Midhat Pasha; as Russia can no longer send an army into Bulgaria, carrying a proclamation of free institutions on the point of its bayonets.

The Porte has now given more to that province than Russia would offer, and Servia is crying for peace. There is no longer, therefore, a decent pretext for war; and as the Emperor Alexander is believed to be earnestly desirous of peace, we may hope, he said, that it will be preserved by the Porte's acceptance of an arrangement on the basis of the last proposals in the Conference,—which the Turkish Ministers ought not to decline, as they have already gained a diplomatic victory in the moderate demands to which the pretensions of Russia have been reduced.

His Excellency fears, however, that no arrangement will be lasting, as the Porte has not sufficient financial resources to redress all the grievances of the provinces, and adventurers who may endeavour to get up new insurrections will always find malcontents to join them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 234.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 33.)
My Lord, *Budu-Pesth, January* 12, 1877.

IN speaking to-day to Count Andrassy of the eventualities likely to follow a breaking-up of the Conference at Constantinople, I said a report is in circulation that Austria intends to occupy immediately a part of Bosnia.

His Excellency answered that it was impossible to say what course the interests of

the country may make it expedient for Austria eventually to adopt; but should she ever occupy Bosnia, the breaking-up of the Conference will not be the cause which will induce her to do so.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 235.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 35. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Buda-Pesth, January 13, 1877.*

IN a conversation which I had this morning with Count Andrassy, his Excellency referred to the scheme I had mentioned to him the previous day, of the Powers being given a right to watch over the execution of the new Turkish Constitution, and he expressed surprise that Midhat Pasha could think of such an arrangement, as an unfriendly Power might thus find frequent opportunities of interfering in the affairs of the Empire, and of raising questions dangerous to its stability.

He spoke hopefully of Monday's Conference, and said that, in the meanwhile, an effort would be made to influence the decision of the Sultan by addressing representations to His Majesty through a private channel.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No 236.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 37. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Buda-Pesth, January 13, 1877.*

PREVIOUSLY to my receiving a copy of a telegram addressed to your Lordship by Lord Augustus Loftus yesterday, I observed in a conversation with Count Andrassy, that the Russians are alleged to pretend that they have an intimate understanding with Austria on the Eastern Question, and his Excellency answered that such a statement, if it has been made, is like their sending him a telegram urging the signature of the Protocol proposed by General Ignatiew, as England and the other Powers had agreed to sign it, and the assent of Austria alone was wanting. Since I received the telegram I said to him that it is now rumoured that, if the Conference fails, Russia, instead of invading Turkey, will renew her proposal for a joint occupation of the Northern Provinces by herself and Austria, and his Excellency answered that having proposed that once she is not likely to do so a second time.

I do not pretend to know whether a secret understanding exists or not between Austria and Russia, but my reporting private conversations with Count Andrassy will enable your Lordship to draw your own conclusions from the language of his Excellency.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 237.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 39. Most Confidential.)
My Lord, *Buda-Pesth, January 13, 1877.*

SINCE forwarding a telegram to your Lordship this afternoon, I have again seen Count Andrassy, and I learnt from his Excellency that he is not satisfied with reports which he had just received from Constantinople, as he finds that the modified proposals of the Porte are less acceptable than he understood them to be, and that so much of the original demands has been left, that there is little probability of their being accepted.

He said his own opinion has never varied as to there being no middle course between proposing reforms to the Porte, consistent with the sovereignty and independence of the Sultan, and adopting measures intended to lead to the disruption of the Empire.

I had some hesitation in speaking to his Excellency of the attitude alleged to have been lately taken in the Conference by the German Ambassador, but whatever it may have been, Count Andrassy said he had been surprised at the language held by him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 238.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 41.)
My Lord, *Buda-Pesth, January 14, 1877.*

AN arrangement having apparently been made with the Czecks, that General Tchernaieff should visit Prague, he arrived there on the 11th instant, and was received with great enthusiasm. About 3,000 persons, principally students and artisans, awaited his arrival at the station, of which they broke the doors and windows in order to reach him, and they afterwards followed him to his hotel, singing patriotic songs. He appears to have been waited upon also by deputations, and to have been visited by M. Rieger and other leaders of the Czeck party.

On the 13th he was to have visited the Czeck theatre, where a great ovation was to have been given him; but he was stopped early in the day in the streets by a police agent, on his way from the Russian church, and ordered to leave the town and Bohemia by the first train. He protested in vain, and on reaching his hotel, found his rooms under the surveillance of the police, who allowed no one to enter them, except persons attached to his suite. By the exertions of the Czeck party, however, a crowd of, it is said, 4,000 persons were collected before the hotel, whom he wished to address from the window, but, on his refusing to retire at the request of the police, a battalion of infantry was posted before the hotel, and the streets leading to the railway were occupied by cavalry and infantry, so as to prevent any communication between him and his admirers. In the evening he left for the station, declaring that he only yielded to force, accompanied by a commissary of police, who only left him at Bodenbach.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 239.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 7. Political. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Bucharest, January 8, 1877.*

I BEG to transmit to your Lordship an extract, which I have cut out of one of the Bucharest newspapers, quoting the precise Treaties which have regulated the relations between these Principalities and the Sublime Porte.

Your Lordship will observe that the historical and technical grounds on which this Government bases their grievance would have afforded them a fair case for a very moderate protest, but the argument ought to have been confined to the historical and technical side of the question, and the protest, under no circumstances, should have run riot in extravagant assertion of rights and intemperate menaces, which latter this country is not in a condition to put into execution.

M. Jonesco is announcing that the Government has received approval of their protest on the part of Austria, Germany, and Russia, but that Sir Henry Elliot has expressed himself in a Turkish sense.

I attach, however, but little credence to the above as far as approbation is concerned, as General John Ghika, the Roumanian Agent at Constantinople, is an untrustworthy source of information, while experience teaches me that Roumanian Ministers are often inclined to make statements in the colour which they think will be agreeable to the Chamber and the country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

Inclosure in No. 239.

Extracts from Treaties on which the Roumanian Protest to the Porte is based.

L'INDIVIDUALITÉ DU TERRITOIRE ROUMAIN.—Avant d'entrer dans toute discussion posons quelques jalons qui nous servirons à nous orienter s'il nous fallait démontrer cette évidence, l'individualité du territoire Roumain.

1. Le Traité de 1391 dit que "les sujets Ottomans qui passeront sur le territoire Valaque et les sujets Valaques qui passeront sur le territoire Ottoman, ne pourront être vexés ni réclamés par l'un ou l'autre Etat."

Le territoire Valaque était donc distinct du territoire Ottoman.

2. Le Traité de 1460 dit (Article IV):—"Les Roumains qui se rendront en Turquie ne seront pas soumis au harash (capitation)."

La distinction entre les deux territoires Valaque et Ottoman est ici encore formelle.

3. Le Traité de 1511 contient, à l'Article VIII, une exception très précise:—"Les Turcs ne pourront ni posséder ni se fixer en Moldavie."

Si le territoire Moldave n'eut pas été distinct du territoire Roumain, cette exception eût-elle été possible?

4. L'Article I du Traité de 1529 est formel:—"La Porte reconnaît la Moldavie comme pays libre et non conquis."

L'Article IX est plus explicite encore:—"Le titre de pays indépendant sera conservé à la Moldavie; il sera reproduit dans tous les écrits que la Porte Ottomane adressera au Prince."

L'Article VII renferme la même exception que l'Article VIII du Traité de 1511:—"Aucun Ottoman ne pourra posséder en Moldavie ni terres, ni maison, ni magasin; nul ne pourra non plus entrer dans le pays pour affaires de commerce que s'il y est autorisé par le Prince."

5. Ces capitulations ont reçu une consécration solennelle du Congrès de Paris de 1856, qui base sur elles les droits de l'Etat Roumain (Article XXII du Traité) et de la Convention de 1858, qui dit à l'Article II:—"En vertu des Capitulations émanées des Sultans Bajazet I (1390), Mahomet II (1460), Sélim I (1513) et Soliman II (1529), qui constituent leur autonomie en réglant leurs rapports avec la Sublime Porte . . . . les Principautés continueront de jouir, sous la garantie collective des Puissances Contractantes, des priviléges et immunités dont elles sont en possession."

6. La rétrocession d'une partie de la Bessarabie, non au territoire Turc, mais à la Moldavie sous la suzeraineté de la Porte (Article XXI du Traité de Paris), est une preuve sans réplique.

Ces textes sont formels, au-dessus de toute discussion. En les méconnaissant, la Sublime Porte viole la règle la plus élémentaire du droit des gens, le respect des Traités conclus.

NOTES ET INFORMATION.—L'Article XXIII du Traité de Paris dit formellement:—

"La Sublime Porte s'engage à conserver aux Principautés leur administration indépendante et nationale, ainsi que la pleine liberté de culte, de législation, de commerce et de navigation."

Les Conseillers du Sultan ont sans doute oublié que la Turquie a pris cet engagement solennel à la face de l'Europe. Les Plénipotentiaires qui siégent à Constantinople le lui rappelleront, nous en avons la ferme conviction.

No. 240.

Mr. St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 2. Political.)

My Lord, *Jassy, January 12, 1877.*

AN attempt being apparently made to revive the Jewish question in Roumania, and to excite general sympathy by the propagation of false or exaggerated reports, I beg to draw your Lordship's attention to a recent number of the "Monde Illustré," in which is depicted a sensational representation of a military demonstration in the streets of Jassy against the Jews.

The sketch in question having been copied in other illustrated papers is now being widely circulated, and represents an attack made on the Jews by Roumanian soldiers.

During the five years I have resided at Jassy no disturbance of the kind has ever taken place; the incident may, therefore, be fairly put down as a pure invention on the part of the artist, whom I know to be a Jew of Bucharest, an occasional contributor to the "Illustrated London News."

As no explanation accompanies the sketch the descriptive details are entirely left to the imagination of the public.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. ST. JOHN.

No. 241.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 41.)

My Lord, *Paris, January 19, 1877.*

THE Duc Decazes spoke to me this morning of the rejection of the proposals of the Conference by the Grand Council at Constantinople, the intelligence of which reached Paris yesterday afternoon.

The Duke said that he still confidently hoped that there would be no disturbance of the peace of Europe. The newspapers had, he told me, been premature in announcing that the Russian Government had already issued a Circular declaring that it would not separate itself from the rest of Europe, nor make war upon Turkey by itself.

He had, however, reason to hope that the Russian Government was in fact animated by a strong desire to maintain the union of the Great Powers, and to preserve peace.

The Duke went on to say that no doubt the Conference would at first be represented as a great failure. He thought, however, that hereafter it would appear that it had in fact accomplished a most useful work.

It would, he sincerely trusted, prove to have placed the good relations between the several Great Powers on comparatively solid ground, and to have enabled Europe to tide over a very critical period without war.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 242.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 42.)

My Lord, *Paris, January 19, 1877.*

THE Duc Decazes told me this morning that Odian Effendi had come to him a few days ago and had suggested that in lieu of the guarantees proposed by the Conference, the Porte should enter into an agreement with the Great Powers which should place under their superintendence the execution of the new constitution, and of the reformed system about to be introduced into the Provinces.

The Duke told me that in reply he had pointed to the clock, and observed that, allowance being made for the difference of longitude, it appeared that the Conference at Constantinople must at that moment be coming to the conclusion of its sitting. It was, he had added, purposeless to bring forward at Paris at that late time a proposal, which, if made at all, should have been made to the Conference at Constantinople.

The Duke proceeded to observe to me that peace might still be endangered if the Porte should follow up its rejection of the proposals of the Conference by any imprudent act or even by any imprudent language. He should, he said, give a caution on this point to the Turkish Ambassador here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 243.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20, at night.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 20, 1877, 6·45 P.M.*

AT the Conference to-day Safvet Pasha announced that, in conformity with unanimous decision of the Grand Council, Porte must reject the proposals respecting the nominations of the Governors-General and the International Commission.

Porte would, however, agree to Commission, as proposed in Count Andrassy's note, for Bosnia, Herzegovina, Adrianople, and Danube. If this was accepted by the Plenipotentiaries he was confident of an understanding being come to upon the reforms advocated by them, to many of which Porte had already assented.

He hoped, therefore, Conference would continue to discuss them.

The other Plenipotentiaries, considering the two rejected conditions indispensable, declared that there were no further grounds for continuing the Conference, which was then dissolved.

The Turkish Plenipotentiaries appeared to me anxious to place distinctly on record that the failure of the Conference was due to their unwillingness to agree, not to the reforms, but only to the guarantees required for them.

No. 244.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 21, night.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Very Confidential.) *St. Petersburgh, January 21, 1877, 5 P.M.*

EMPEROR told French Ambassador this morning that he would not separate from the European concert, but he hoped that Europe would not allow a question which equally regarded the honour and interest of all, to degenerate into a Russo-Turkish question.

A Russian circular will be addressed to Europe in moderate but energetic language.

No. 245.

Project of Note suggested to the Conference by General Ignatiew.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby confidentially by Count Münster, January 22, 1877).

LES événements qui se sont produits depuis dix-huit mois dans quelques unes des provinces Chrétiennes de la Turquie et la lutte engagée entre la Sublime Porte et les Principautés de Serbie et de Monténégro ont attiré l'attention la plus sérieuse des Grandes Puissances. Désireux de conserver la paix Européenne et de maintenir le *statu quo* politique en Orient, tout en assurant une existance meilleure aux populations éprouvées par les derniers événements, les Cabinets Garants ont accepté le rôle de médiateurs entre le Gouvernement Ottoman et les Principautés en lutte avec lui et posé les bases sur lesquelles la paix devait être rétablie et le sort des populations Chrétiennes amélioré. Ces bases formulées par le Principal Secrétaire de Sa Majesté Britannique et acceptées successivement par les autres Cabinets, ont été discutées et développées par les Représentants des Grandes Puissances à Constantinople dans des réunions spéciales. Elles ont pris ainsi la forme de propositions détaillées qui furent communiquées à MM. les Plénipotentiaires Ottomans dans la première séance de la Conférence.

Au lieu d'adhérer à cette expression du vœu unanime et immuable de l'Europe, dicté par un désir sincère de conservation, la Sublime Porte y a opposé un contre-projet qui s'éloignait entièrement des bases de la Conférence acceptées par le Gouvernement Ottoman lui-même. Dans ces conditions les délibérations ultérieures demeuraient sans objet, vu que les Représentants des Grandes Puissances ne pouvaient abandonner le programme qui leur a été tracé par leurs instructions.

Les efforts d'entente et de pacification entrepris par les Cabinets Garants se trouvant ainsi compromis, les Représentants de ces derniers à la Conférence croient devoir faire un dernier appel au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté le Sultan, et lui rappeler la grave responsabilité qui retomberait sur lui s'il refusait de se prêter à ce que les Puissances Garantes de la Turquie considèrent comme une nécessité absolue pour la conservation et pour le maintien de la paix. Ils viennent donc demander à la Sublime Porte de déclarer dans l'espace de trois jours, à dater de la remise de la présente note, accompagnée d'un résumé des propositions qui lui ont été faites au nom des six Grandes Puissances, si elle adopte les principes qui y sont exposés.

Ce n'est que dans ce cas que les travaux de la Conférence pourraient être repris et qu'il serait possible de procéder à l'examen en commun des détails des propositions Européennes.

Le Soussigné, Ambassadeur Extraordinaire et Plénipotentiaire de . . . . . près Sa Majesté le Sultan a en conséquence l'honneur d'informer son Excellence

Safvet Pacha, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, que, si au terme indiqué plus haut, une réponse satisfaisante n'est pas donnée à la demande unanime des Grandes Puissances, le Gouvernement . . . . . juge le maintien d'un Ambassadeur auprès de la Porte superflu et le Soussigné a reçu l'ordre de quitter immédiatement Constantinople.

Le Gouvernement du Sultan altérerait ainsi lui-même la nature des rapports politiques qu'il entretenait avec le Cabinet de . . . . . et assumerait la responsabilité entière de toutes les conséquences qui pourraient en résulter. Toutefois le Soussigné croit devoir prévenir son Excellence Safvet Pacha que si à la suite de cette rupture des négociations de paix, les hostilités dont les Puissances avaient en vue de prévenir le retour étaient reprises, ou si la sécurité des Chrétiens était sérieusement compromise dans les provinces intérieures ou dans une des villes du littoral, le Gouvernement . . . . . considérait une semblable éventualité comme une provocation à l'Europe, et ne s'inspirant que de ses devoirs de Grande Puissance, prendrait telles mesures qu'il jugerait nécessaires pour porter remède au mal qu'il a vainement cherché à combattre par des moyens pacifiques.

En recommandant ce qui précède aux méditations les plus sérieuses de M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, le Soussigné se flatte de l'espoir que l'esprit éclairé et le patriotisme bien connu de son Altesse le Grand Vizier et de son Excellence Safvet Pacha, leur inspireront des décisions conciliantes de nature à éviter à la Turquie de grands malheurs, ainsi que les conséquences que pourrait entraîner une rupture avec l'ordre de choses légal qui avait établi les conditions de son existence au milieu des Etats civilisés et garanti son intégrité territoriale.

No. 246.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 22.)

(No. 3. Political.)
My Lord, *Beyrout, January 8, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch No. 2 and its inclosure, which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, reporting on the political state of Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 246.

Consul-General Eldridge to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Beyrout, January 8, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 26th ultimo, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the promulgation of the new Constitution does not appear to have been received with the same equanimity at other places in Syria as at Beyrout.

At Sidon and other places the Mussulmans at first interpreted it as a return to the strict Mahommedan law, as it existed previously to its modification by more recent legislation, and their satisfaction was only equalled by the alarm felt by the native Christians. Its tendency has, however, been since better understood, and the satisfaction of the Moslems has consequently diminished, while the alarm of the Christians has proportionably increased.

At Tripoli the excitement appears to have been considerable, as your Excellency will perceive by the inclosed copy of a report which I have received from Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Blanche, describing what has occurred at that place, which I recommend to your Excellency's consideration. The "Torch" being absent in the north, I was unable to request Captain Hammond to proceed to Tripoli, as Mr. Blanche suggests.

On the 5th instant I received from Mr. Vice-Consul Tattarachi, of Messina, the following telegram, dated the same day:—"Thousands soldiers arrived; all stores shut; disturbances commenced; people afraid; send man-of-war," of which I informed you the same evening by telegraph, and also sent to Captain Hammond, of Her Majesty's ship "Torch," at Alexandretta, a telegram in the same sense, which, however, could not be forwarded, owing to the office at Alexandretta being closed for the night, till the following morning, when I also informed Mr. Tattarachi of the steps I had taken; but

as I have received no further information on the subject, I trust matters have somewhat calmed down.

These events, coupled with the facts reported by Mr. Consul Skene in his despatches, tend to prove that the announcement of the new Constitution has not produced a beneficial effect upon the minds of the Mussulman population of Syria in general, but rather, on the contrary, has served to revive a spirit of fanaticism, the absence of which has of late been so remarkable, and it is to be feared that this spirit will be increased in intensity, should still larger concessions be demanded of and conceded by the Porte.

The result of the Conference is most impatiently and anxiously awaited by all classes in Syria, as upon that the general tranquility of the country will depend more than on the Constitution, the form of which is unknown, and it is doubtful whether it will ever be possible to carry out its conditions in the present state of political ignorance of the great mass of the people.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 246.

M. Blanche to Consul-General Eldridge.

M. le Consul-Général, *Tripoli, le 3 Janvier*, 1877.

LE Dimanche, 24 Décembre dernier, notre ville a été mise dans l'émoi par un télégramme de Constantinople annonçant qu'une Constitution nouvelle allait être mise en vigueur dans l'Empire Ottoman.

Le Mutessarif, Chaker Bey, réunit les Tribunaux et les chefs des communautés, pour leur communiquer cette importante nouvelle, qui fut immédiatement saluée de vingt-un coups de canon.

Les Chrétiens paraissent assez indifférents à cette annonce d'un bienfait qui n'est pas encore réalisée, et dont ils ne saisissent pas au juste l'importance.

Les Musulmans, au contraire, n'ont pas hésité à voir dans cette nouveauté une atteinte à leur constitution religieuse ; le mécontentement fut grand parmi eux.

Malgré la précaution oratoire prise dans le télégramme pour les rassurer sur la question dogmatique, ils comprirent néanmoins qu'ils étaient sérieusement menacés d'avoir à subir le régime de l'égalité avec le Chrétien. Cette perspective, toujours irritante, les agita, leurs passions fermentèrent ; et lorsque, peu de jours après, le Courbân Bairam arriva, ils firent sentir aux Chrétiens tout le fiel de leur humeur. Ils se livrèrent envers eux, sur la voie publique, à des insultes multipliées, souvent à des voies de fait qui, sans être graves, n'en témoignent pas moins d'une animosité profonde.

Je vis Chaker Bey, et j'appelai son attention sur cet état de chose, en lui signalant divers cas venus à ma connaissance ; il me témoigna les meilleurs dispositions, et je crois à sa bonne volonté. Néanmoins les quatre jours de fête se passèrent dans cette effervescence, je jugeai moi-même que toute cette population, une fois rendue à ses occupations journalières, se calmerait d'elle-même et en effet, il se passa un jour ou deux, pendant lesquels tout me parut assez tranquille. Mais voici que de nouveaux faits se reproduisent. Il y a eu encore des injures, des coups, même des actes de pillage sur les personnes en pleine rue.

Hier on m'a amené un malheureux Chrétien qui vendait des oranges en étalage sur une place publique à la porte de la ville. Un Musulman, en passant, lui marchande une orange, et, sans aucune provocation, lui assène sur la figure un coup de bâton, qui lui fait sauter les dents, et le met dans le plus pitoyable état.

En voyant des faits de cette nature on conçoit combien est faible la distance qui les sépare du meurtre proprement dit ; et il est évident que la passion qui domine dans cette population fanatisée est véritablement la soif de sang.

J'ai envoyé immédiatement prévenir le Gouverneur de ce qui se passe. Ce n'est malheureusement pas Chaker Bey, qui est parti pour les districts après la fête. Son Vékil, Mumtaz Effendi, a paru ému à ma communication. Je ne sais s'il aura le pouvoir d'arrêter et de punir l'aggresseur du Chrétien marchand d'oranges. J'en doute il est mal secondé par son Chef de Police, qui montre en général peu de zèle pour réprimer les désordres de cette nature. Sous un chef énergique et actif, il ferait probablement son devoir. Mais sous une autorité hésitante, comme est celle de Tripoli en ce moment, il y aurait plus à craindre qu'à espérer de lui.

Quoi qu'il en soit, le répos publique est incontestablement troublé en ce moment.

La situation des Chrétiens dans le bazar est à peine tolérable. Ils aspirent de tous leurs voeux à voir paraître quelque bâtiment de guerre ; et il est certain qu'une visite du "Duconedic" ou du "Torch" serait parfaitement opportune. Il serait aussi beaucoup à désirer que l'autorité de Tripoli reçut quelque avertissement supérieur pour la rappeler au sentiment du devoir et de la responsabilité.

Je suis, &c.
(Signé) J. BLANCHE.

No. 247.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 22.)

(No. 11.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, January* 9, 1877.

I CALLED this morning on Prince Gortchakow, and inquired of his Highness what progress the Conference was making, and what were his hopes of a favourable solution.

Prince Gortchakow, without appearing either sanguine or dejected, replied that he could express no opinion in regard to the probable issue of the Conference, as the position was constantly changing from day to day.

With regard to the idea of resuming the Conference in another capital in case of its failure at Constantinople, an idea which his Highness stated originated with the Italian Government, Prince Gortchakow stated that if all the Powers agreed to it, Russia would do so likewise, but that he should not take the initiative in the matter.

I am informed that M. d'Arbril, the Russian Ambassador at Berlin, has expressed an opinion (probably at the instigation of Prince Bismarck) that the renewal of the Conference in another capital could lead to no useful purpose, unless it were for the purpose of deliberating on a combined action to enforce on Turkey the proposals of the Powers.

In the event of the Conference breaking up I have reason to think that the Russian Government will take no immediate action, and that they will maintain an expectant attitude, under the shelter of Europe.

On the other hand, a fear has been expressed to me that Turkey, if not controlled by Europe, may declare war against Russia, in which event, Russia will look to Europe for support.

There is no desire here for war, not even in the military circles ; but if it should unfortunately be forced on Russia it will no doubt meet with the patriotic support of the nation, however great may be the sacrifices which it will inevitably entail.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 248.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 22.)

(No. 14. Confidential.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, January* 11, 1877.

I HAD the honour to receive this morning your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, marked Confidential, stating that the Italian Ambassador in London had said that in case the Conference broke up unsuccessfully the Austrian Government meditated an immediate occupation of a portion of Bosnia, and that in such an event the Italian Government feared a general agitation in Italy for the annexation of the Trentino.

I saw the French Ambassador yesterday, and he mentioned to me in strict confidence that only a few days ago, he had had a conversation with Prince Gortchakow with a view to ascertain what was the amount of intimacy and real confidence between Russia and Germany.

Prince Gortchakow, he said, stated in very decided language, that Russia had the most entire confidence in Germany, and that this confidence had been fully confirmed by the line which Germany had taken during all the negotiations on Eastern affairs.

In referring to Austria, Prince Gortchakow stated that although there were some questions on which there might be a divergence of opinion between Austria and Russia, they were of no real importance, that the relations between the two

Governments were most satisfactory, adding that at that very moment an "affectionate" exchange of correspondence was taking place between the Emperor Francis Joseph and the Emperor Alexander.

The existence, therefore, of this perfect understanding between the three Emperors and their Governments renders very improbable any isolated action on the part of Austria, such as is referred to by the Italian Ambassador in London, whilst it would equally serve to restrain any ambitious project on the part of Italy at the expense of Austria. There is no doubt that there are aspirations on the part of Italy for the annexation of the Trentino, nor are they of recent date. The Chevalier Nigra, the Italian Ambassador at this Court, revealed as much to Prince Gortchakow, as reported in my despatch No. 386 of the 29th of August last, although the subject was mentioned only as an eventual counterpart to the possible annexation by Austria of any portion of the Turkish territory, and there is no doubt that the Italian Government has of late paid considerable court to Russia, looking probably for her support in the eventuality referred to. These advances of Italy were not distasteful to Prince Gortchakow, for they served the double purpose of securing Italian support in favour of the Eastern policy of Russia, and of acting as a check on Austria in case of her taking a line divergent from that of Russia.

If the Conference should be broken up at Constantinople without any successful issue, I do not apprehend any immediate isolated action on the part either of Austria or Russia. The latter, more especially, will not separate from the European concert, but will rather seek to shelter herself behind Europe, and to engage European support for the protection of the Christian subjects of the Porte. It is impossible, however, to foresee what events may occur should the Conference break up, nor how the pacification between the Porte and the insurgent provinces may be brought about. A renewal of the war will add fresh fuel to the flame of discord and cause fresh embarrassments to the limitrophe States, while, at the same time, it is not probable that the three Northern Empires will accept passively the affront which they will consider as offered to themselves and to Europe by the rejection by the Porte of the proposals of the Conference, and consequently further negotiations may be resumed between the Powers with a view to collective action in the event of unforeseen events occurring which may render such action indispensable.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 249.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 22.)

(No. 20.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, January 17, 1877.*

I AM informed that the German Ambassador at this Court has stated to Prince Gortchakow that instructions have been sent to Baron Werther at Constantinople to join his colleagues at the Conference in their proposals to the Porte, and not to separate from them. He is further instructed to leave Constantinople whenever General Ignatiew should do so.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 250.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 22.)

(No. 21.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, January 17, 1877.*

YOUR Lordship will doubtless have received from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Belgrade a report of the difficulties which have lately arisen between the Servian Government and the corps of Russian volunteers.

General Nicolin was sent from here by the Imperial Government to endeavour to arrange these matters and to report on the true state of affairs.

I am informed that on his advice it was found desirable that the remaining volunteers, amounting to about 2,000, should return to Russia, and I believe that with the pecuniary assistance of the Imperial Government this course has been decided on.

M. Marinovitch has also left this on his return to Belgrade, at the request, I believe, of Prince Milan, who is anxious that he should accept the presidency of the Ministry.

I have had several conversations with M. Marinovitch, and have been most favourably impressed by the language he held. He told me that he would only accept office on condition of peace being insured. He had been always opposed to the war, which, he said, had brought the country to ruin and disaster, and he considered the continuance of it as physically impossible.

M. Marinovitch had several audiences of the Emperor, and I am told that the opinions he expressed to His Majesty in regard to Eastern affairs have had a very beneficial effect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 251.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 22.)

(No. 24.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, January 17, 1877.*

THEIR Imperial Majesties held a Court of Felicitation on the Russian New Year, which was attended by the Ambassadors and the members of the Diplomatic Corps.

His Majesty, who appeared in better health than when I had last seen him, informed me, with evident satisfaction, that he had received that morning satisfactory intelligence from London in regard to the Conference at Constantinople, and he expressed a hope that it would lead to a successful issue.

Caboully Pasha, the Turkish Ambassador, being absent on account of his health, Tewfik Bey, the Chargé d'Affaires, was presented on this occasion. His Majesty addressed him in very friendly terms, expressing his desire to maintain good relations with Turkey, and his hope that the Porte would accept the proposals of the Powers, adding that the responsibility for the failure of the Conference would rest with the Sultan and his Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 252.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 22.)

(No. 34.)
My Lord, *Berlin, January 16, 1877.*

PRINCE BISMARCK told me to-day that the report which has lately appeared in the press about a change of policy on the part of the German Government in regard to the Conference is quite unfounded, and that to all appearance the "Agence Havas" is responsible for the first intimation of it, which has since been so widely circulated.

An official rectification has been published in the "Reichs Anzeiger," of which I have the honour to inclose herewith a copy and translation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Inclosure in No. 252.

Newspaper Extract.

DES bruits ont été répandus, ces jours-ci, par la presse étrangère sur une prétendue situation isolée que l'Allemagne aurait prise ou voudrait prendre à la Conférence. L'origine de pareils bruits doit être attribuée à "l'Agence Havas." De toutes ces nouvelles il n'y a pas un mot de vrai. Aujourd'hui, pas plus qu'auparavant, l'Allemagne ne représente et ne défend à Constantinople aucun intérêt direct, et elle a non pas plus, mais plutôt moins de motifs que les autres Puissances de hâter la marche des négociations pendantes, et d'y produire des demandes allant au delà de ce à quoi les autres Puissances se tiennent. Le Représentant de l'Allemagne à la Conférence a l'ordre, après comme avant, de se joindre à toutes les démarches de ses collègues, et, au cas où la Porte

persisterait à repousser les demandes communes, de quitter Constantinople avec les autres Ambassadeurs. Sa conduite a été exactement conforme, en réalité, à ces instructions, et les nouvelles en sens contraire, émanant principalement de sources Françaises, reposent sur des mensonges calculés.

No. 253.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 22.)

(No. 36. Secret.)

My Lord, *Berlin, January 16, 1877.*

I HAD a long conversation with Prince Bismarck to-day, of which the following is a précis:—

His Highness said that the Conference was drawing to a close, and that he would be glad to know what Her Majesty's Government intended to do after it.

I said I did not know, but, judging from the present situation, I imagined that Her Majesty's Government would do nothing.

Prince Bismarck replied that, if he were consulted, his advice would certainly be to do nothing, because there was nothing to be done.

He never liked Conferences—he never expected any useful result from them; and as far as he was concerned, he never would go into Conference again.

I said I could not agree with him. The Conference was a necessary experiment, and it had produced useful though unexpected results. It had shown the strength of Turkey and the weakness of Russia, and had confirmed the European concert, so that we were better informed and better able to deal with the questions now than before the Conference; and, if war ensued between Turkey and Russia, it could be localised, which would be an advantage to the rest of Europe.

Prince Bismarck said he did not require a Conference to tell him all that, and he feared the future consequences of the Conference more than he regretted its present failure.

Turkey had displayed the spirit of two centuries ago, but had happily refrained from sending the Ambassadors to the Seven Towers, whilst the collapse of Russia would leave a sense of humiliation and bitterness among her populations that would drive them into future efforts to retrieve their military honour, when it might to difficult to localise a war into which Russia would seek to drag other nations.

I said that was a remote contingency; did he think Russia equal to a conflict with Turkey at present?

He replied that, judging from the anxiety displayed at St. Petersburgh to avoid war, he must conclude that Prince Gortchakow either felt unprepared, or was reluctant to transfer the power at present in his own hands to those of the War Office or a Commander-in-Chief.

I said that the intimate relations existing between Russia and Germany must enable him to ascertain what was really intended.

Prince Bismark said that since the commencement of the Conference he had not been consulted or informed by any Power except Austria. The Conferences had been managed by the Marquis of Salisbury, General Ignatiew, and Count Chaudordy. He did not complain of neglect since he had no interest in the matter, but he regretted to detect a tendency on the part of the French Government to set Russia against Germany. With what object he did not well know, but he hoped it was only to produce sufficient alarm "on 'Change" to facilitate the Duc Decazes' favourite pastime.

Now it was easy enough to establish a row between Russians and Germans, because individually there was no love lost between them.

He well knew that he was as much hated in Russia as Prince Gortchakow was laughed at in Germany.

On the other hand, the two Governments had been friends for more than a century, which proved that there must be real material advantages in an alliance that was certainly not based on either international love or respect.

It was the duty of a German Minister to prolong an understanding which secured the frontier of Germany against invasion from Memel to Ratibor.

Russia had rendered Germany services which she could not forget, and Russia should not be misled by France into thinking she could not rely on Germany any more.

He therefore wished to give Russia what moral support he could in her present

humiliation, and the more so to disprove the calumnies of a hostile Press that accused him of wanting to weaken Russia still more by urging her on to war.

He had already rendered her a signal service by persuading Austria to desist from interference between Russia and Turkey, and he was glad to think that he had re-established a complete understanding between Austria and Russia for the present. But whether that understanding would be a lasting one or not he could not say, because a change of Ministry in Austria might undo all his work.

I asked what Austria had proposed to do?

He replied that Austria objected to a Russian occupation of Servia, as well as to a "localized war" between Russia and Turkey, but that he had proved to Count Karolyi that interference was more dangerous than strict neutrality in the present case.

On the other hand, he had persuaded Russia to give up the idea of an occupation of Servia, in deference to the objections of Austria.

As matters now stood, he believed Russia wished earnestly for peace, and would not attack Turkey; but if Turkey declared war, he thought Russia should be satisfied with one victory, and pay for it by relinquishing all idea of conquest.

That would be his advice to Russia, if consulted.

I said I thought he believed Russia to be unequal to a conflict with Turkey.

He replied that that was his impression for the present, but that Russia some months hence might be better prepared to resist an attack on the part of Turkey than now.

He hoped that Turkey left to herself would think better of it, and would not attack Russia, and that was the reason for which he held that the less done by the Powers after the Conference the better, so as to let Turkey reflect on her isolation.

I said it appeared to me that the understanding between Germany, Austria, and Russia was precarious, to say the least of it.

Prince Bismarck replied that it might appear so while they discussed their respective interests, and differed on certain points, but that their earnest desire to maintain the peace of Europe would always unite them to avert war.

I asked whether he had ever heard it reported that Count Andrassy sometimes boasted to his friends of "privately propping up the Turks?"

Prince Bismarck replied that he did not believe Count Andrassy had ever said so, and if he had, his object must have been to throw sand in somebody's eyes. Count Andrassy well knew that a change of Ministry in Austria would not be favourable to Hungary. He was a prudent Statesmen, and also knew the value of an intimate understanding with Russia as well as he (Prince Bismarck) did himself.

On taking my leave the Chancellor begged I would consider what he had said as strictly private and confidential.

The upshot of his remarks I take to be that he is afraid of a Franco-Russian alliance, and means to prevent it by supporting Russia in the coming crisis by a somewhat more than benevolent neutrality.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 254.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, January 22, 1877, 4·45 P.M.*

MR. ST. JOHN telegraphs that he is starting for Belgrade, leaving Mr. Truscott in charge at Jassy. This arrangement seems suitable. Mr. White may come home viâ Belgrade if he wishes it, subject to returning if required.

No. 255.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 22, at night.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, January 22, 1877, 4 P.M.*

I SAW Prince Gortchakow this morning. His Highness considers the refusal of the Porte as an insult to Europe. He declined to say what course he would take, but he holds to the European concert, and considers that Europe should defend her honour by coercive measures.

He expressed satisfaction that the Plenipotentiaries had all signed the declaration, and that identic instructions had been given to the Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople.

His Highness in mentioning a report which had reached General Ignatiew that Turkey would treat directly with Russia, stated emphatically that Russia would not treat independently of Europe.

No. 256.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 22, at night.)

(Telegraphic.) *Rome, January 22, 1877.*

THE Minister for Foreign Affairs has particularly requested me to telegraph as follows:—

"The Italian Government regret that the Plenipotentiaries of the Powers who had acted as mediators between Servia, Montenegro, and the Porte, should have separated without having made an effort, which would probably have been successful, to induce the Porte to convert armistice with those Principalities into an indefinite truce on the basis of the *statu quo ante bellum*."

No. 257.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 23.)

(Decypher.)
(No. 5.)
My Lord, *Tiflis, January 11, 1877.*

THERE are eighteen guns in position at Poti, of these, four 15-ton guns are on island and at mouth of river, and four 20-ton guns near harbour. Total force at present at Tiflis and on frontier is, I believe, 75,000 infantry, 12,000 cavalry, and 25 to 30 batteries. The battery has but 150 men. At Alexandropol there are 28,000 infantry, 4,200 cavalry, and 15 batteries. At Erievan are 11,000 infantry, 1,800 cavalry, and probably 5 batteries, though none are reported. At Akalzek are 8,000 infantry, 1,200 cavalry, and 3 or more batteries. At Akhalkalaki are 6,000 infantry and 1,200 cavalry. Between Ozurget and Poti are 14,000 infantry, 2,300 cavalry, and 4 or more batteries. At Soukoum Kalé 2,400 infantry; and at Tiflis 6,400 infantry, 1,200 cavalry, and 8 or more batteries.

If 110,000 men are to be placed on frontier, there are 19,000 still required. Adding these to the 16,000 to be left in Daghestan, and deducting this from 50,000, the reinforcements said to be expected, there would remain but 15,000 over. If these be added to the 110,000, it would give a total of 125,000. Some allowance must be made for train and hospitals, hence total of combatant force under such conditions would be about 120,000 men.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. T. RICKETTS.

P.S.—Kurds, near Bashkale and Urmin, have gone to service of Turkey.

No. 258.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January 23.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 20 Janvier, 1877.*

DANS la séance d'aujourd'hui de la Conférence, j'ai exposé les motifs impérieux qui nous obligent de décliner les deux propositions relatives à l'institution d'une Commission Internationale et à la nomination des Valis avec l'agrément des Puissances.

A la Commission Internationale nous avons substitué, sur la base des propositions du Comte Andrassy, la formation de deux Commissions de Musulmans et de Chrétiens

librement élus par la population, l'une pour la Bosnie et l'Herzégovine, et l'autre pour le Vilayet du Danube et d'Andrinople, et qui seraient investies des attributions les plus essentielles et les plus pratiques de celles que le projet accordait à la Commission Internationale. De plus, nous avons déclaré que le Gouvernement Impérial admettait dès à présent les points suivants du même projet:—

1. La division des vilayets en sandjaks.
2. L'élection des Assemblées des vilayets pour une durée de quatre ans.
3. La fixation du Budget des vilayets pour ces mêmes Assemblées.
4. L'indépendance des tribunaux.
5. La publicité des audiences.
6. La liberté entière des cultes.
7. La juridiction exclusive des autorités ecclésiastiques pour les causes spéciales des différentes confessions.
8. L'entretien du clergé et des établissements religieux, ainsi que des établissements d'instruction publique, par les communautés elles-mêmes.
9. Les garanties contre les conversions forcées.
10. La formation d'une Gendarmerie de Musulmans et de Chrétiens avec des officiers subalternes nommés par les Gouverneurs-Généraux.

Pour les autres points le dit projet permettrait:—

1. La sub-division des cazas en cantons de 5,000 à 10,000 habitants avec des autorités cantonnales librement élues par la population dans chaque commune.
2. L'abolition des fermages.
3. Le non-emploi de levées irrégulières.
4. L'interdiction de la colonisation en masse des Circassiens en Roumélie.
5. L'amnistie générale et sans distinction.
6. La prohibition du port d'armes.

Nous avons déclaré que nous étions prêts à entrer en discussion, et que nous étions certains d'arriver à une entente. Nous avons, par conséquent, prié les Plénipotentiaires de procéder à la discussion sur chacun des points qui restaient à arrêter définitivement. Malgré cela, les Représentants des Puissances ont considéré la non-adhésion de la Sublime Porte comme constituant une divergence insurmontable, et ont annoncé la décision de clore la Conférence et de quitter Constantinople.

Nous nous sommes rendus à la Conférence animés du désir très-sincère de nous entendre avec les Puissances. Nous n'avons jamais cessé d'attacher une importance très-grande à leurs conseils et à leur bienveillance. Nous n'avons pas voulu, et nous ne voulons pas nous priver du concours bienveillant de l'Europe. Nous avons fait tout au monde pour ne pas arriver à ce résultat fâcheux. Mais, de l'autre côté, les vrais amis de l'Empire et toute la nation Ottomane nous aurait reproché justement, si nous acceptions ces propositions, comme n'ayant ni opinion ni souci de l'indépendance et des intérêts de notre pays. Il nous est impossible de croire que nos efforts pour défendre les droits de notre Souverain et la dignité de l'Empire soient de nature à nous priver de la sympathie de l'Europe.

Nous connaissons l'équité et la justice des Gouvernements. Ils voudront bien apprécier les raisons qui nous ont guidés dans ces négociations.

Veuillez donner lecture de cette dépêche à M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères.

No. 259.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 23, 3·8 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Pera, January 23, 1877, 2 P.M.*

LORD SALISBURY left this morning. The weather being very bad General Ignatiew has postponed his departure till to-morrow.

No. 260.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, January 23, 1877.*

FROM what Musurus Pasha has said to me there seems a prospect of the Turkish Government making overtures to Servia and Montenegro for the conclusion of definitive

peace. I have strongly urged this course. If such overtures should be made at Belgrade, Mr. White or Mr. St. John should press the Servian Government to show a conciliatory disposition and come to terms. Please instruct Mr. White accordingly if he is still at Constantinople, or if not, forward to him the substance of this telegram.

No. 261.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, January 23, 1877, 5·45 P.M.*

THE Secretary of State for War requests that you will desire the officers of Royal Engineers under Colonel Home, who are not employed on the mission entrusted to them by Lord Salisbury, to return at once to England as travellers, each taking his own way.

It is suggested that, if practicable, two, including Captain Anstey, should return by Odessa, one proceeding by Jassy and the other by Woloczyska, and others by various routes across the Balkan by Burghaz, Varna, Pravadi, Schumla, Roustchouk, Silistria, Matchin, Isaktcha, and Touldscha.

Colonel Lennox may retain one of these officers (not Captain Fraser) if he desires to do so.

No. 262.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, January 23, 1877.*

FROM what Musurus Pasha has said to me there seems a prospect of the Turkish Government making overtures to Servia and Montenegro for the conclusion of a definitive peace. I have strongly urged this course.

If such overtures should be made to Prince of Montenegro, Mr. Monson should press him to show a conciliatory disposition and come to terms. Please instruct him accordingly.

No. 263.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 18.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January 23, 1877.*

I GATHER from the language used by Musurus Pasha that there appears to be a prospect of overtures being made by the Porte to Servia and Montenegro for the conclusion of a definitive peace. I have strongly urged upon him my opinion as to the expediency of this course being adopted.

If such overtures should be made to the Prince of Montenegro, Mr. Monson should be prepared to press His Highness to show a conciliatory disposition and a readiness to come to terms; and I should wish your Excellency to give him at once instructions to this effect.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 264.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 36B.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January 23, 1877.*

I GATHER from the language which Musurus Pasha has held in conversation with me that there appears to be a prospect of the Porte making overtures for the conclusion of definitive peace with Servia and Montenegro. I have strongly advised this course being pursued.

In the event of such overtures being made at Belgrade, it is the wish of Her Majesty's Government that Mr. White or Mr. St. John should urge the Servian Government to show a conciliatory disposition and to come to an arrangement with the Porte.

I have, therefore, to request your Excellency to give Mr. White instructions to that effect, if he is still at Constantinople. If he is not, your Excellency will communicate to him the substance of this despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 265.

Consul Skene to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 1. Political.)

My Lord, *Aleppo, January 3, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of my despatch No. 1 to Sir Henry Elliot, reporting continued indications of hostile feelings towards the Christians and Jews on the part of the Mussulmans in this province.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

Inclosure in No. 265.

Consul Skene to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Aleppo, January 3, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency of the non-Mussulman inhabitants of the town of Killis, in this province, being subjected to constant insults offered to them by the Mussulmans. Christians and Jews are openly accosted in the streets as accursed infidels, their wives and daughters have their veils violently pulled down, and the Chief Rabbi has had his turban knocked off his head, and trampled in the mud. I have spoken on this subject to the Governor-General, as well as on that of the beating of a Greek priest at Edlib, reported to your Excellency in my despatch No. 37 of the 28th ultimo, and he has assured me that he is taking effectual steps for the punishment and prevention of such offences.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

No. 266.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 4. Political.)

My Lord *Beyrout, January 8, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 3, Political, of this day's date, I have the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch and its inclosures, which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, further reporting on the present state of affairs in Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 266.

Consul-General Eldridge to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Beyrout, January 8, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatch of this day's date, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a further report, and its inclosure which I have received from Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Blanche, respecting the disorders at Tripoli, and the action

of the local authorities in the matter, which I consider most reprehensible and deserving a severe reprimand.

It is one of those cases of tergiversation that the Ottoman authorities are so frequently guilty of, in order to conceal and misrepresent facts which reflect discredit upon themselves, that destroy all confidence in their statements even when they happen to be truthful, and, therefore, ought not to be suffered to pass without notice.

The Governor-General, however, appears to have performed his duty, and consequently no blame can attach to him.

I have just received the following telegram from Mr. Vice-Consul Tattarachi, dated Messina, 7th instant, 1.30 P.M.:—

"3,000 arrived. Wali, of Adana, sends regulars presently. Tranquillity prevails. Man-of-war will restore confidence."

M. Tattarachi, who is also Greek Vice-Consul, has written to my Greek colleague on the subject of the disorders, and states that some of the Redifs invaded his premises, that he was compelled to give them 3 liras to get rid of them, and that the consternation was general, but gives no further details of importance.

As I have no information as to whether Her Majesty's ship "Torch" has proceeded to Messina, I have again telegraphed to Alexandretta, suggesting that it would be advisable that she should do so.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 266.

Acting Vice-Consul Blanche to Consul-General Eldridge.

M. le Consul-Général, *Tripoli, le 6 Janvier*, 1877.

DANS la journée du Jeudi 4 courant, il est arrivé du vilayet un télégramme demandant à notre Gouverneur des informations sur les faits qui ont troublé le repos public, et annonçant l'intention d'envoyer au plus tôt de la force armée pour comprimer le désordre. Les deux grands tribunaux se réunirent aussitôt, et après délibérations, un mazbata fut rendu et télégraphié en réponse au Valy. Dans cette réponse, l'autorité de Tripoli oppose une dénégation absolue aux faits dénoncés à Son Excellence, et prétend qu'il n'y a pas même en apparence de trouble; elle invoque à l'appui de cette assertion le témoignage de Monseigneur Sofronios, Evêque Orthodoxe de Tripoli, qui, appelé au serail pendant la délibération, aurait déclaré qu'il ne s'était rien passé contre les Chrétiens.

Le lendemain matin, Vendredi, Monseigneur l'Evêque eut connaissance de ce mazbata et du témoignage que l'autorité prétendait avoir reçu de lui; il protesta avec énergie et déclara qu'il n'avait en aucune façon témoigné dans le sens qu'on lui prêtait. Sur le champ, il adressa au Valy un télégramme pour rétablir la vérité; il a bien voulu me donner le texte de ce télégramme. J'ai l'honneur de vous en transmettre la copie ci-inclus.

Pour qui connait l'honorabilité de Monseigneur Sofronios, il est bien évident qu'il n'a pu donner un témoignage aussi contraire à la conscience que celui qui lui est attribué dans le mazbata; au moment où Chaker Bey se disposait à partir pour les districts, l'Evêque, alarmé par l'attitude plus que menaçante des Musulmans, prit l'initiative d'une démarche auprès de lui pour tenter de le retenir, le déclarant responsable de tout le mal qui pourrait survenir en son absence. Pour donner un caractère plus officiel et plus solennel à cette démarche, il l'avait [faite] en commun avec la communauté Maronite.

Une autre fois Monseigneur était venu lui-même chez moi me prier d'agir de mon mieux auprès de l'autorité, de solliciter la présence d'un bâtiment de guerre, de venir en aide par tous les moyens à ma disposition aux Chrétiens maltraités et gravement menacés; il se conduisit, en un mot, dans toutes ces affaires avec l'activité et la sollicitude d'un pasteur justement inquiet pour son troupeau. Est-il admissible, après ces actes publics qu'il ait pu rendre contre lui-même et contre son troupeau le témoignage qu'on lui prête?

C'est évidemment l'autorité de Tripoli qui se pourvoit en tout ceci; elle pouvait, sans encourir aucun blame de qui que ce fut, reconnaître qu'il y avait eu effectivement une effervescence populaire et personne n'eut été tenté ni de l'en accuser, ni d'en exagérer la portée. Mais en niant ouvertement et absolument ce fait public, qui a eu pour témoin toute une grande ville, elle fait preuve d'un audace peu commun et peu honorable; et en même temps, elle trahit des préoccupations peu rassurantes pour les administrés; car il

est difficile de ne pas voir dans une dénégation si contraire à la vérité, l'effet d'une solidarité contre les Gouvernements et les perturbateurs.

Quoi qu'il en soit, l'effervescence semble être beaucoup tombé, mais il en reste toujours quelque chose, car il y a encore en ce jour-ci plusieurs cas d'insulte et de brutalité. L'irritation subsiste quoique plus comprimée, et l'attitude des tribunaux n'est parfaite pour achever de la calmer.

Néanmoins, la ville est plus tranquille, et il y a toute apparence que c'est une émotion passée.

Je suis, &c.
(Signé) J. BLANCHE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 266.

Bishop Sofronios to the Governor-General of Syria.

(Translation.)
(Telegraphic.) *Tripoli, December* 24, 1876. v.s.

MY verbal reply yesterday to the acting Governor was that no perturbation of a general nature by Moslems against the Christians ever took place, but that isolated cases were numerous. Since last week the spirit of the ignorant amongst the Moslems was changed, and consequently I could not perform this year the visits which I was in the habit of making on the occasion of the Baïram to some of their notables, and jointly with my Maronite colleague I requested the Governor to postpone his departure.

Now the Christians having been informed of your Excellency's kind attention feel reassured, and beg to present their best thanks.

No. 267.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 24.)

(No. 5. Political.)
My Lord, *Beyrout, January* 11, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatches Nos. 3 and 4 of the 8th instant I have the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch No. 4 which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople reporting on the recent disturbances at Messina and the state of Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure in No. 267.

Consul-General Eldridge to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Beyrout, January* 11, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatches of the 8th instant, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that yesterday evening I received from Captain Hamond, of Her Majesty's ship "Torch," the following telegram, dated Messina, the 9th instant, at 1·30 P.M.:—

"Arrived yesterday; seen Governor; no disturbances now. Redifs being got under discipline; troops expected daily from Constantinople."

From which I conclude that no further danger is to be apprehended, and that the "Torch" will probably remain at Messina until the Redifs have embarked.

During the last ten days considerable excitement has prevailed, owing to the general impression that war is inevitable; and the enthusiasm of the Mussulmans is being raised to meet the emergency.

It is said that the conscripts for the years 1875 and 1876 had not been called out, and that they are now being enrolled to raise the battalions of the 5th Corps d'Armée now in Syria to their full effective strength.

In Damascus, I believe, the number of volunteers who have entered the National Guard is between 300 and 400, who are drilled three times a week.

The formation of a National Guard has been commenced at Beyrout, as well as, I believe, in other places in Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 268.

Acting Consul Freeman to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 1. Political.)

My Lord, *Bosna-Serai, January 12, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that orders have been received here from the Porte to call out, arm, and drill every able-bodied Mussulman in the Province. Only sons of widows and others who were formerly exempt from any kind of military service will now be forced to serve, but an allowance of 30 piastres a month will be made to those who have any near relation entirely dependent on them for support.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. B. FREEMAN.

No. 269.

M. Contostavlos to M. Gennadius.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by M. Gennadius, January 24.)

Monsieur, *Athènes, le* 31 Décembre, 1876 / 12 Janvier, 1877.

VOUS voudrez bien remarquer de la copie annexée d'un Rapport de M. Coundourioti, l'état actuel de la question des Circassiens, dont la colonisation dans les provinces Grecques de la Turquie a dû inquiéter et inquiète encore à juste titre le Gouvernement Royal. Je m'abstiens de revenir sur les détails de la question, bien connus d'ailleurs aux Légations de Sa Majesté. Je relèverai seulement dans le Rapport du Ministre de Sa Majesté à Constantinople la persistance de la Sublime Porte qui, refusant de s'engager péremptoirement à ne pas coloniser des Tcherkesses en Macédoine, évite aussi de justifier son refus d'une manière satisfaisante et qui puisse au moins tranquilliser le Gouvernement Royal pour l'avenir.

Aussi me fais-je un devoir, Monsieur, d'attirer votre sérieuse attention sur la conclusion du Rapport de M. Coundourioti, et de vous prier de vouloir bien entretenir Lord Derby de l'état peu rassurant de la question des Circassiens, en lui faisant remarquer tous les dangers d'une situation qui pourrait d'un jour à l'autre faire périeliter sérieusement l'état des choses en Orient. Vous voudrez bien aussi prier M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères de la Grande Bretagne de donner à M. le Représentant du Gouvernement Anglais à Constantinople des instructions nettes et catégoriques dans le sens que j'ai eu l'honneur de vous exposer dans mes dépêches précédentes sur la question afin de mettre un terme à une situation inquiétante pour l'avenir.

Veuillez, &c.

No. 270.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 11. Political.)

My Lord, *Bucharest, January 16, 1877.*

IN reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 1 of the 11th instant, this day received, I beg to say that I have not been unmindful of the rumours which have been circulated respecting the renewed persecutions of the Jews in Moldavia.

I have already spoken to M. Jonesco on the subject, stating that I felt certain that Her Majesty's Government would learn with regret and amazement that incidents of this nature were again taking place.

M. Jonesco informed me, what I have since found to be the case, that the whole matter has been much exaggerated, and that in but two cases had complaints been received by this Government.

The original reports having been published in the "Pester Lloyd," the Austrian Agent and Consul-General at once addressed a representation to the Government, and a functionary was immediately despatched on the part of this Government to make an inquiry on the spot.

The report showed that in two cases, Jews, having illegally established retail spirit shops, the stock had been confiscated and fines imposed.

M. Boscia, the Austrian Acting Agent, moreover, informs me that the stories of their effects being publicly sold up to pay the fine, &c. are not true, and that for the other horrors enumerated there is no foundation.

Without in the least desiring to exculpate the oppressive system, which is persevered in by the Roumanian Government towards the Jews, I believe I am justified in saying that the recent rumours have been circulated with the intention of producing a pressure on the Conference at Constantinople, as well as on the Governments which contemplate concluding Commercial Conventions with the Government of Prince Charles.

The Austrian Agency has sent a gentleman to Vaslin, to make an inquiry on the alleged persecutions, and I shall take the earliest opportunity of transmitting to your Lordship the result of his investigations.

I must not omit to add, that on the 13th instant I also spoke to Prince Charles on this subject, and His Highness assured me that the whole story had been trumped up on most insufficient data.

I shall, in compliance with your Lordship's instructions, lose no time in again bringing the matter to the notice of the Roumanian Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 271.

Mr. Fenton to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 10.)

My Lord, *The Hague, January 22, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that, in the course of the debate, on the 19th instant, in the First Chamber of the States-General on the estimates for the Marine Department, the Minister of Marine stated that, in pursuance of a request which had been addressed by the Netherlands Minister at Constantinople to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the steam-ship "Princess Maria," of the Dutch Royal Navy, had been ordered to the Mediterranean, with a view to the protection of Dutch subjects and commerce in the Levant, should such become necessary. But his Excellency added that instructions had been given to the officer commanding that vessel to observe the strictest neutrality in the event of war breaking out.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. P. FENTON.

No. 272.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24, 2 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 24, 1877, 10·50 A.M.*

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs, who called yesterday to take leave of me, told me that he had just seen General Ignatiew, who advised the Porte to make direct peace with Servia.

Minister for Foreign Affairs answered that the Porte was quite ready, but that everything would depend on orders sent to the Prince from St. Petersburgh.

I said to him that General Ignatiew's advice was the best that could be followed, but that the Porte should be satisfied with the *status quo* without bringing forward their first terms. His Excellency acquiesced in this view.

General Ignatiew had also spoken of a peace which should be concluded with Montenegro, and Minister for Foreign Affairs said that Porte would be ready to make some territorial concessions to that Principality.

No. 273.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, January 24, 1877.*

THE following is from Monson, dated to-day:—

"I was informed last night that Constant Pasha is expected in Montenegro, on a special mission. I will lose no time in going to Cettigné as soon as I hear that he is positively coming."

No. 274.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 24.)*

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, January 24, 1877.*

I HAVE instructed Monson as directed by your Lordship's telegram of yesterday.

The Turkish Ambassador has been for some days at Pesth, probably conferring with Count Andrassy on the wish of the Porte to make peace with Servia and Montenegro, but Baron Orczy professes to be entirely ignorant on the subject. He expressed a personal opinion, however, that Servia would not make peace without the assent of Russia, which would probably be withheld.

Count Andrassy has postponed his return to Vienna till the end of the week.

No. 275.

The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.

(No. 6.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January 24, 1877.*

I TRANSMIT herewith a copy of a letter from Messrs. Rothschild respecting further accounts which have been received of outrages perpetrated on poor and unprotected Jews in the neighbourhood of Jassy,† and I have to instruct you to make immediate inquiries regarding the truth of those accounts, and to take such measures as you properly can for the protection of Jews who have been unjustly treated.

You will send the British Vice-Consul at Jassy immediate instructions to this effect as well as any other directions that may be necessary.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 276.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Stuart.

(No. 7.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January 24, 1877.*

THE Greek Chargé d'Affaires called upon me to-day, and left with me the despatch, of which I inclose a copy,‡ complaining of the conduct of the Porte with regard to the colonization of Circassians in the Greek provinces of Turkey.

I made no observation to M. Gennadius, in reply, beyond stating that I would ascertain how the matter stood.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 277.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Jocelyn.

(No. 10.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January 24, 1877.*

THE Greek Chargé d'Affaires called upon me to-day, and left with me the despatch, of which I inclose a copy,‡ complaining of the conduct of the Porte with regard to the colonization of Circassians in the Greek provinces of Turkey.

I made no observation to M. Gennadius, in reply, beyond stating that I would ascertain how the matter stood.

I should wish to receive a Report from you on the subject, and I shall be obliged by your obtaining from Her Majesty's Consuls in the districts in question any particulars which may be necessary to complete the information which you are able to furnish.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 278.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 22.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January 24, 1877.*

COUNT BEUST read to me to-day a despatch which he had received from Vienna, containing the views of the Austro-Hungarian Government upon the present aspect of the Roumanian question, which were represented as follows:—

* Repeated to Constantinople. † No. 208. ‡ No. 209.

Austria-Hungary had never approved the manner in which the Porte acted towards Roumania in the first instance, on the occasion of the publication of the Constitution, and had at that time been of opinion that the Roumanian Government had the right to demand satisfactory explanations on the subject. She had been ready, in case of need, to intervene in the affair with the Porte in favour of the Principality, and Count Andrassy had not hesitated to speak in that sense to M. Balaceano.

Now, however, that the Porte had formally declared that the Constitution which had been promulgated did not concern Roumania, and might be considered, as regarded that Principality, as *non avenue*; that no notification of the new Constitution had been made at Bucharest; and that the Porte had formally engaged to respect the privileges of Roumania guaranteed by Treaty, the Austro-Hungarian Government considered that, in view of these declarations, the incident in question might be held to be at an end. The justice of that view was confirmed by the fact that it had been officially reported to them that a disavowal on the part of Safvet Pasha was thought at Bucharest to be the best solution of the affair; and that it was impossible to imagine a disavowal more complete than that which had been given by the Porte. The Porte, after the steps it had taken, would refuse to give further explanations, and Roumania would, in their opinion, do well to consider the question as having been settled.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 279.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 25.)

(No. 43.)

My Lord, *Buda-Pesth, January 15, 1877.*

I HAD the honour to forward yesterday to your Lordship, by a messenger passing through Vienna from Constantinople, a report of the circumstances under which General Tchernaieff was forced to leave Prague and the territory of Bohemia.

In consequence of instructions from Prince Gortchakow, the Russian Ambassador has asked Count Andrassy to-day for explanations as to the arrest of the General; and his Excellency replied that he had not been arrested, and that he had only been ordered by the Bohemian police, as they were entitled to do by the law, to leave the province; because his proceedings were causing disturbances at Prague; and if force had been employed on the occasion, it had been because he had refused to obey the orders given to him. Many of his sympathizers have been arrested, and he has been followed by others to Dresden, who will treat him as a martyr of Austrian tyranny. It might, therefore, have been more expedient if the Government had not interfered with him.

I have, &c.
I have, &c. ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 280.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 25.)

(No. 45. Most Confidential.)

My Lord, *Buda-Pesth, January 15, 1877.*

I HAVE reason to believe that the Russian Ambassador, who arrived here yesterday, has been urging Count Andrassy not to allow himself to be influenced by the intrigues of Midhat Pasha, who, he alleges, is endeavouring to cause disunion among the members of the Conference at Constantinople, by holding different language to each of them.

I understand from Count Andrassy that he represents the Grand Vizier to have expressed his readiness to carry out the wishes of Russia for the extension of the territory of Montenegro to the sea, if General Ignatiew would support him in resisting the proposals of the Conference in other questions.

Count Andrassy tells me that he answered he was equally anxious with the Russian Government for the successful issue of the Conference, but that he could not, like Count Zichy, sit at the feet of General Ignatiew.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 281.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 25.)

(No. 51. Most Confidential.)
My Lord, *Vienna, January 22, 1877.*

WHEN I was at Pesth last week, I had some conversation with Count Andrassy as to the intentions with which M. Marinovitch has returned to Belgrade.

His Excellency said that he thinks M. Marinovitch is of opinion that it would be premature for him to take office immediately, and that he seemed to consider that the country had little prospect of being wisely and prosperously governed under the sovereignty of Prince Milan.

I asked whether M. Marinovich thought that matters would be improved by Rara Georgevitch replacing His Highness, and his Excellency answered that, on the contrary, his opinion of the latter was even worse than of Prince Milan, and what he appeared to wish for was the acceptance by a German Prince of the Sovereignty of the Principality.

I observed that there was little probability of Russia permitting such an eventuality, and Count Andrassy said that, though the assent of Russia might be dispensed with, it was absurd to expect that a Slav population would willingly accept a German for their Sovereign.

I have since learnt from a gentleman who has lately left Belgrade that Prince Milan has requested M. Marinovitch to form a Government, but that he declined, stating that it was for M. Ristich, who had made the war, to arrange with the Porte the conditions of peace.

With respect to the terms on which it might be made, my informant said that the Prince would gladly accept a peace on the basis of the *status quo ante*.

Baron Orczy, with whom I have spoken on the subject to-day, said that almost all the Russians had left the Principality, and it appeared to him that Prince Milan could not do better, as a first step towards peace, than to intimate to the Porte that whatever eventualities might occur on the Danube, he and his people would remain neutral, and abstain from all hostile action against Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 282.

Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 25, 5·52 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Pera, January 25, 1877, 3·40 P.M.*

SIR HENRY ELLIOT left Constantinople to-day after having presented me as Chargé d'Affaires. I have taken charge of the archives and plate of Her Majesty's Embassy.

No. 283.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 26.)

(No. 6.)
(Decypher.)
My Lord, *Tyflis, January 12, 1877.*

THREE batteries of 9-pounders arrived to-day from Russia, one battery left for Erievan. In Daghistan there are one division of Infantry, thirty to forty guns, and some 1,700 Cavalry. If, as I reported in my despatch No. 4, 16,000 men are sent there, it is evident that the Russians expect trouble in that quarter. I am told that the Russians are constructing a fort at Uzunkuju, half way between Khiva and Krasnovodsk. I am also told to-day they are unable to continue making the wells on that line. The sand storms causing them great difficulties. The battalions have apparently but 640 men, the squadrons but 100, and the batteries but 150, and it would seem that this army is not yet on a war footing.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. C. RICKETTS.

No. 283ª.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 26.)

(No. 4.)
My Lord, *Scutari, January 12, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, the copy of a despatch addressed this day by me to Sir Henry Elliot, reporting that the Turkish authorities are alarmed at the agitation that is being created among the Mirdites, and pointing out the policy that ought to be observed by the Porte in North Albania.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 283ª.

Consul Kirby Green to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Scutari, January 12, 1877.*

I HAD the honour to inform your Excellency yesterday by telegraph that Dervish Pasha had become anxious concerning the insurrectionary agitation that is being carried on among the Mirdite mountaineers.

He told me that he had ascertained that 7,000*l.* had been recently sent into Miridicia through my Russian colleague, M. Jastrebon, and that Marco Milan, the Montenegrin chief who had so successfully conducted the recent military operations around Medun, had proceeded to Orosci to confer with Prenk Bib Doda, taking with him 3,000 Montenegrin caps, which were to be distributed to mountaineers who would be embodied as a Montenegrin contingent in Miridicia.

He further informed me that notice had reached him of a projected landing of 500 Italians at Ismi, a place under Cape Rodom in the Gulf of Drino, and that he had consequently directed Brigadier-General Haki Pasha to proceed immediately with the only available man-of-war to that part of the coast, for the purpose of devising the best means of repelling the expected incursion, and he had telegraphed to the Porte suggesting that the naval force in these waters should be increased.

His Excellency understood that the Mirdites had been promised continued pecuniary support by Russia, and arms and men by Italy.

Although Dervish Pasha endeavoured to lead me to believe that his intelligence has been derived from secret and trustworthy sources, I am inclined to think that the Turkish authorities here have only now come to know, through the channels of public rumour, of the information conveyed to your Excellency by my despatches Nos. 79 and 81 of the 23rd and 31st ultimo, and that they have been at last alarmed by the feeling of uneasiness which is being developed in the Mirdite mountains through their disregard of the pretensions of the Chieftain Prenk Bib Doda, and the return from Cettigné of the Rev. Don Primo, with the Mirdite Aide-de-camp of the Prince of Montenegro, who is the son of Captain Cola, the uncle of Prenk Bib Doda, and the avowed ally of the Montenegrins.

As I have already had the honour of explaining to your Excellency, I am not of opinion that the Mirdites or the other Roman Catholic mountaineers will do anything tending to permit of a Slav encroachment in North Albania. Their extreme penury, however, makes them eager for money coming from any source, and they are not sorry that they can acquire it by merely maintaining an attitude expressive of their determination not to tolerate the slightest attempt on the part of the Turkish Government to deprive them of the autonomy they have always enjoyed.

If Italian Garibaldians should succeed in penetrating into the mountains of Miridicia they would soon find that the Mirdites are incapable of subsisting them, and they would be unable to induce their hosts to join them in seeking an enemy, and food at the same time, in the plains; whilst, on the other hand, it is not likely that the Turks would venture into the mountains, so that matters would remain very much the same as they are now.

Still, there is no doubt that, if war should break out between Russia and Turkey, when probably the Turks would be unable to maintain a sufficient number of troops either in this province or in that of Prisrend (Old Servia), the North Albanian mountaineers would move down into the adjoining plains, and would endeavour to establish their right

by priority of arrival, to the quasi-abandoned districts of Mahommedan rule, and they would thus necessarily become a hostile element for the Ottoman Government.

I have not failed to point out to Dervish Pasha, as well as to the Governor-General, Mustafa Pasha, on every favourable occasion, how easy it would be for them to keep North Albania perfectly contented and loyal, as the only possible way of withdrawing the mountaineers from their allegiance is by raising their fears that their privilege of self-government is in danger. Unfortunately it is exactly this privilege, existing ever since the Ottomans came into the country, which no Vali or Mouchir can contemplate without experiencing the desire for its destruction, and no arguments of inopportunity or inexpediency appear capable of influencing such functionaries.

By a judicious support of the Roman Catholic clergy, the Turkish authorities might obtain their warmest co-operation in continuing the administration of North Albania on its present basis, and making it utterly impossible for any foreign aspirations,—Italian, Austrian, or Russian,—to receive the slightest encouragement; but here, again, it seems beyond the power of a Turkish official to avail himself of efficient instruments, when they happen not to be Mahommedan.

The following occurrence illustrates my meaning.

Two Albanian peasants, belonging to a village close to the Montenegrin frontier, a man and a woman, were recently arrested on suspicion that they were in communication with the enemy. They were, however, innocent, and the parish priest called on the Pasha to intercede for their release. Failing in his prayer, he sent to beg me to use my influence with his Excellency, and the two prisoners were immediately set at liberty, the Pasha assuring me that this would have been done days before had not a Roman Catholic priest been to him to speak on their behalf.

I trust that in the foregoing remarks I have not conveyed to your Excellency an impression that Dervish and Mustafa Pashas are considered by me especially responsible for the misgovernment of the province, for I am convinced it is the traditional policy of the Turks, and not merely the men, that is most in fault. No Pasha, who is not sent here with the most positive orders to conciliate the Roman Catholic clergy, and consequently also their flocks, and not to aim at destroying an autonomy which centuries of nibbling have failed to diminish, is ever likely to comprehend that his duty is other than that of affirming the supremacy of Islam over Christianity, and the chance of checking the advance of the Orthodox Slavs by another equally powerful Christian element will be lost.

Three weeks ago the local authorities chose to disregard my warnings, and to decline my suggestions for averting threatened complications; now they have rushed from a pretended sense of security into an extreme of alarm, and which may ultimately be justified if war breaks out, and if the Porte leaves the Pashas here to follow their own inspirations and ideas of government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 284.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 26.)

(No. 34.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January 19, 1877.*

I REFERRED to Mr. Consul Blunt your Lordship's despatch No. 815 of the 6th December, inclosing copy of a despatch from the Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs to M. Gennadius, in reference to a Vizirial Order injuriously affecting the Orthodox Greek Church, which was said to have been lately issued by the Porte to the Governors of the Vilayet of Salonica respecting the payment of diocesan dues by Bulgarians in their jurisdiction, and I have now the honour to forward to your Lordship a copy of his report to me on the subject.

I have, &c
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 284.

Consul Blunt to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Constantinople, January 11, 1877.*

WITH reference to Lord Derby's despatch to your Excellency No. 815 of the 6th ultimo, I have the honour to report that the levying of church dues among the Bulgarians has always been a sore subject to the Greek Bishops in Macedonia, and a source of much trouble and discussion to the provincial authorities.

There are several Bulgarian centres in the Vilayets of Salonica and Monastir, the inhabitants of which are considered schismatics by the Greek Church, because they only acknowledge and submit to the special authority of the Bulgarian Exarch, and pay to the latter the church dues which they formerly paid to the Greek Bishops.

In fact a great deal of the bitterness felt by the Greek Church at the independence of the Bulgarian Church is caused by the loss of their dues.

The Greek Bishops have always endeavoured to recover these dues, but with intermittent success, and in the long run the Bulgarians were the real sufferers, for it sometimes happened that they were forced to pay dues to the Greek Church which they had already paid to the Bulgarian Church.

Some time before I left Salonica I was informed that the Greek Bishops availed themselves of the late outbreak in the Vilayet of Adrianople to recover their authority over the Bulgarians in the Vilayets of Salonica and Monastir by artfully insinuating to the people that they would incur the charge of either disaffection or of rebellion if they continued to be schismatics, and would suffer the same calamities which befel their countrymen in Thrace; and these Bishops offered to assist and protect them if they would only submit to the authority of the Greek Patriarch.

I believe some villages have thus been induced to detach themselves from the Bulgarian Exarchate, and to acknowledge the Patriarch as their spiritual chief. It is very likely that the Bulgarian Exarch is trying to counteract this movement, but whether he does so with the support of the Porte or the provincial authorities I cannot yet say.

There is no doubt that the inhabitants of the Vilayets of Salonica and Monastir are disturbed by Panslave agencies in the same way as they are by the Hellenic propagandas, the former under the support and direction of Russian Consuls, the latter under that of the Greek Consuls, at least such is the general impression in Salonica; but the other foreign Consuls generally do their best with a view to better the condition of these inhabitants, and, as regards Her Majesty's Consulate, while it spares no efforts in that direction, it does nothing calculated to encourage Panslave or Hellenic agitation in the country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

No. 285.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 26.)

(No. 37.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January 14, 1877.*

YESTERDAY Midhat Pasha proceeded to the Fanar and paid a formal visit to the Œcumenical Patriarch, it being the first time—certainly at least for a great number of years—that a Grand Vizier has shown this condescension to the head of the Orthodox Church.

The Patriarch was surrounded by the members of the Holy Synod and by some of the chief persons of his community to receive his Highness, who addressed them in terms which gave the utmost satisfaction.

The earliest Sultans had, he said, promised their Greek subjects "privileges and immunities" which the Sultan Abdul Hamid was determined not only to respect but to increase, by putting them on the same footing as those who belonged to a different religion.

They were all equally to be designated as Ottomans, and his Majesty's wish was that all his subjects should feel themselves to belong to a common country, and to contribute equally to its prosperity.

The Patriarch answered by expressing his gratitude to the Sultan and his confidence in the Grand Vizier.

Sultan Mahomet, he said, had conquered the Greeks of Constantinople by the sword, and Sultan Abdul Hamid was now conquering their hearts by his consideration for them.

Midhat Pasha, in announcing his intention of paying this visit to the Patriarch, had said in the presence of many persons, that he considered it only proper to exhibit his recognition of the loyal attitude maintained by the Greeks, and to make them feel that their conduct would not be forgotten.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 286.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 26.)

(No. 38.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January 15, 1877.*

A DEPUTATION of Hungarian students from the University of Pesth arrived here last week with the object of presenting a sword of honour to Abdul Kerim Pasha, on behalf of the youth of Hungary, in honour of his victories in Servia, and has been most warmly welcomed.

They were received last Saturday by the Serdar Ekrem, and I have the honour to inclose an account, extracted from the "Levant Herald" of what passed on that occasion.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 286.

Extract from the "Levant Herald."

No. 287.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 26.)

(No. 39.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January 15, 1877.*

SAFVET PASHA informs me that General Ignatiew, in speaking to him of the Roumanian Government, that the Principalities should be declared neutral, had stated that it could only be complied with upon condition of their independence being recognized.

If the Principalities were to continue to be regarded as forming part of the Turkish Empire the Russian Government could not consent to their neutralization.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 288.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 26.)

(No. 40.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January 16, 1877.*

THE accompanying list of the foreign vessels of war now in the harbour of Constantinople has been furnished to me by Lieutenant Maitland Dougall, R.N., of Her Majesty's ship "Bittern," who informs me that although the tonnage and the number of men given in it are in most cases from his own computation, he believes the figures to be approximately correct.

Your Lordship will observe that there are at present three Russian vessels lying here, and that the Swedish, American, and one of the Russian ships are of a larger class than those which have hitherto been allowed to pass through the Straits.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 288.

List of Foreign Ships of War in Constantinople Harbour, January 16, 1877.

Name.	Nationality.	Class.	Tons.	Guns.	Men.
Bittern.. ..	English ..	Gun-vessel ..	774	3	95
Antelope ..	Ditto	Paddle-vessel ..	1,015	2 signal guns	75
Vandalia ..	American ..	Corvette ..	1,800–2,000	8	220
Balder	Swedish ..	Ditto	1,600–1,700	9	200
Petrel	French ..	Paddle-vessel ..	550–600	2 signal guns	60
Gladiateur ..	Ditto	Gun-vessel ..	450–500	2	71
Pomeranin ..	German ..	Paddle-vessel ..	600–700	signal guns	60
Comet	Ditto	Gun-boat ..	350–400	3	70
Albatross ..	Austrian ..	Gun-vessel ..	650–700	2	115
Vedetta ..	Italian ..	Ditto	700–800	4 brass 9-pounders	70
Mestre	Ditto	Screw yacht ..	250–300	signal guns	35
Sucol	Russian ..	Corvette ..	1,100–1,200	4 (?)	200
Kiryldyk ..	Ditto	Paddle yacht ..	1,300–1,400	signal guns	100
Taman	Ditto	Ditto	700–800	ditto	60

No. 289.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 26.)

(No. 43.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January 17, 1877.*

EIGHT Turkish ships of war are being prepared to be sent to the Mediterranean, in consequence, I understand, of the announcement of orders having been given to the Russian fleet to proceed to that sea.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 290.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 26.)

(No. 46.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January 18, 1877.*

THE decision come to this afternoon by the Grand Council of the nation, of which your Lordship has been informed by telegraph, can have surprised no one who knew the temper of the public.

Two causes contributed mainly to the rejection of the proposals brought forward by the European Plenipotentiaries.

The Turks have at all times made a dogged resistance to advice coming to them from suspected quarters, but have generally, under pressure, given a grudging assent to distasteful counsel proceeding from those of whose friendly interest and sympathy they felt assured, and many of them have said to me within the last few days that if the proposals had come direct from the English and French Governments, upon whose advice they were accustomed to rely, they would have had every chance of acceptance.

The preliminary Conferences held at the Russian Embassy inspired a feeling of profound distrust, and everything emanating from them was without hesitation set down as a device of their great enemy.

Then came the knowledge of some of the first conditions to be offered for their acceptance.

The new territorial divisions, the presence of foreign troops, the confinement of the Turkish forces to the fortresses and principal towns, the mode of nomination of the Valis, but more especially the European Commission with the extended powers attributed to it, were regarded as an insult to the nation and an attack upon its independence, which must be rejected at all hazards.

Since the withdrawal or modification of these conditions I have been incessant in my efforts to convince men of all classes, Turks official and unofficial, and Christians of every denomination, that there was nothing in what remained of the propositions to which the truest patriot might not at once consent, but every one of them maintained the rooted objection to a Commission, which had been roused by the character at first attached to it.

Representations of the limited duration and inoffensive nature of the proposed Commission were sometimes met by a reference to the last European Commission to which the Porte had consented.

A year and-a-half ago it had agreed to a Consular Commission proceeding to the Herzegovina upon an engagement that it should be withdrawn as soon as it had made a certain communication to the insurgents; but that engagement was not fulfilled, and the Commission remained at Mostar, affording by its presence a direct encouragement to the insurrection by keeping alive hopes of an ultimate European intervention; and this example was not calculated to give confidence in the assurances now made.

In the Grand Council of to-day, the Christians, as was foreseen, were as unanimous and energetic as the Turks in insisting on the rejection of the proposals, but it need not be supposed that they took the line because they imagined it to be agreeable to the Turkish authorities; for there is not a doubt of their feeling as passionately on the subject as the Mussulmans.

However much we must deplore the loss of a prospect of arriving at an arrangement which would avert the probability of war, we may at least hope that, so immediately after the promulgation of a Constitution of which the object is to establish the equality of all and to give them a common interest in the Empire, this cordial union of Mussulmans and Christians in a crisis of such magnitude may not be without some good consequences.

One great fact has been established beyond dispute.

The pretensions of Russia to be regarded as the protector of the Christians of Turkey are repudiated by the Christians themselves with an energy which must surprise all those who were not before acquainted with their feelings towards that Power.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 291.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 26.)

(No. 47.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 18, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship the accompanying copy of a letter addressed by M. Bratiano, the Roumanian Special Agent, to the members of the Conference, requesting them to take into consideration the claim of Roumania to the Delta of the Danube, together with a copy of my reply.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 291.

M. Bratiano to Sir H. Elliot.

M. l'Ambassadeur, *Constantinople, le 14 Janvier*, 1877.

LE Gouvernement de Son Altesse Sérénissime le Prince Charles de Roumanie m'a chargé de soumettre à l'appréciation de la Conférence réunie à Constantinople la question du Delta du Danube.

Je me suis empressé, en conséquence, de m'adresser à Safvet Pacha, Président de la Conférence, en le priant de saisir MM. les Plénipotentiaires des Puissances Garantes de la demande du Gouvernement Roumain. Son Excellence n'ayant pas cru devoir agréer ma prière, je prends la liberté d'adresser directement cette demande à chacun des membres de la Conférence. J'ai le ferme espoir qu'ils voudront bien l'accueillir avec faveur et en faire l'objet de leurs délibérations dans les réunions qu'ils auront à Constantinople, ou ailleurs.

En même temps je les prie de vouloir bien introduire dans la Conférence la demande de neutralité que j'ai eu l'honneur de leur communiquer dans le cas où son Excellence Safvet Pacha n'aurait pas eu occasion de le faire.

Maintenant qu'il me soit permis de présenter ici en peu de mots la justification de notre demande relative au Delta du Danube.

En 1812 et 1829 la Sublime Porte a cédé à la Russie une partie de la Moldavie, la Bessarabie, comprenant le Delta du Danube jusqu'au bras de St. Georges, qui formait la frontière entre la Turquie et la Moldavie. Certes, la Sublime Porte n'avait pas le droit de céder un territoire qui ne lui appartenait pas, et qu'elle s'était même engagée à défendre par les armes contre toute agression étrangère.

C'est à ce prix seulement que la Moldavie avait consenti par ses Capitulations à reconnaître la suprématie honorifique de la Sublime Porte et à lui payer une somme annuelle à titre de compensation.

Le mal que la Sublime Porte a fait alors à la Moldavie a été réparé en partie par les Grandes Puissances, qui lui ont restitué en 1856 la basse Bessarabie, y compris le Delta du Danube, si injustement détachés de cette Principauté en 1812 et 1829.

L'Article 21 du Traité de Paris s'exprime en effet en ces termes:—

"Le territoire cédé par la Russie sera annexé à la Principauté de Moldavie sous la suzeraineté de la Sublime Porte."

Vient ensuite le Protocole du 6 Janvier, 1857, où il est dit:—

"Les Plénipotentiaires conviennent que les îles comprises entre les différents bras du Danube à son embouchure et formant le Delta de ce fleuve, ainsi que l'indique le plan No. 2 ci-joint, et paraphé, au lieu d'être annexées à la Principauté de Moldavie, comme le stipulait l'Article XXI du Traité de Paris, seront replacées sous la souveraineté immédiate de la Sublime Porte, dont elles ont relevé anciennement."

Les motifs qui ont déterminé les Puissances à modifier en partie l'Article XXI du Traité de Paris se fondent, on le voit, sur la prétention élevée par la Sublime Porte que les îles comprises entre les différents bras du Danube lui appartenaient anciennement. Or, cette prétention tombe d'elle-même devant les termes formels de l'Article III du Traité d'Andrinople, dont voici la teneur:—

"Le Pruth continuera de former la limite de deux Empires depuis le point où cette rivière touche au territoire de la Moldavie jusqu'à sa jonction avec le Danube. De ce point la ligne frontière suivra le cours du Danube jusqu'à l'embouchure de St. Georges, de sorte que, laissant toutes les îles formées par les divers bras de cette rivière en possession de la Russie, la rive droite restera comme anciennement en possession de la Porte Ottomane, &c."

Une fois démontré que la frontière de la Turquie était anciennement la rive droite du bras de St. Georges, que par conséquent les îles comprises entre les différents bras du Danube ne pouvaient relever de la Sublime Porte, il est évident que par cela même les dispositions du Protocole du 6 Janvier, 1857, sont annulées de droit, que l'Article XXI du Traité de Paris rentre en vigueur dans toute son étendue, et que le Delta du Danube doit être restitué à la Moldavie, son ancienne propriétaire, comme l'a été l'autre partie de la Bessarabie cédée par la Russie.

La Turquie ne saurait rien objecter à cet acte de tardive justice. Il serait en vérité exorbitant d'admettre qu'après avoir privé illégalement la Moldavie de sa plus belle province elle vint aujourd'hui lui disputer un territoire dont la propriété lui est reconnue par les Traités même conclus entre la Sublime Porte et la Russie.

Au droit de la Roumanie ainsi établi viennent se joindre des considérations d'un autre ordre.

La ligne de délimitation tracée en vertu du Protocole du 6 Janvier, 1857, entre la Turquie et la Roumanie, a fait à cette dernière une situation intolérable, ainsi qu'on peut se convaincre par la carte ci-jointe.

En effet les habitants des communes rivéraines rendues par la Russie propriétaires des Iles du Delta, sont traités actuellement comme des étrangers sur leur propre territoire communal et soumis à toute sorte de vexations qui font naître des conflits continuels entre les autorités Turques et Roumaines. Aujourd'hui la Roumanie se trouve privée en Bessarabie de tous les avantages qui découlent pour elle de sa position géographique et tout accès par ses propres eaux à la mer lui étant fermé, sa liberté de commerce et de navigation n'est plus qu'un vain mot. La Commission Européenne du Danube elle-même a été unanime pour reconnaître en 1861 la nécessité de modifier cet état de choses.

J'aime à espérer que les Puissances pénétrées de la légitimité de nos droits, voudront bien les consacrer, en restituant à la Roumanie le Delta du Danube, conformément aux dispositions de l'Article XXI du Traité de Paris.

Je saisis, &c.
(Signé) D. BRATIANO.

Inclosure 2 in No. 291.

Sir H. Elliot to M. Bratiano.

M. l'Agent, *Constantinople, le 15 Janvier*, 1877.

J'AI l'honneur d'accuser la réception de votre lettre d'hier, par laquelle vous invitez la Conférence à prendre en considération la question du Delta du Danube.

J'ai l'honneur de vous faire observer que la modification de l'Article XXI du Traité de Paris n'a pas été faite, comme votre lettre semblerait l'indiquer, par le Protocole du 6 Janvier, 1857, mais bien par le Traité qui fut signé le 19 Juin de la même année par toutes les Puissances Signataires du Traité antérieur, et que la Conférence actuelle ne se propose comme but que de régler les questions qui menacent la paix publique sans porter atteinte aux arrangements des Traités existants.

Je vous prie, &c.
(Signé) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure 3 in No. 291.

Sir H. Elliot to M. Bratiano.

Sir, *Constantinople, January* 15, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date, requesting that the Conference should take into consideration the question of the Delta of the Danube.

I have the honour to point out that the modification of the XXIst Article of the Treaty of Paris was not made, as seems to be intimated in your letter by the Protocol of the 6th of January, 1857, but by the Treaty signed on the 19th of June of the same year by all the Contracting Powers of the earlier Treaty, and that the business of the present Conference is to endeavour to arrange the questions which endanger the public peace without disturbing any of the existing Treaty arrangements.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 292.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 26.)

(No. 40.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 18, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith the copy of a note which I have received from the Porte, complaining of further violations of the line of demarcation by the Servians. I shall hand a copy of this note to Mr. White, and request him, on his return

to Belgrade, to bring the repeated complaints of the Porte to the notice of the Servian Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 292.

Memorandum.

LES Serbes continuent à se livrer à des actes de pillage et d'assassinat en deça de la ligne de démarcation.

Dans la nuit de Jeudi à Vendredi 22 Décembre, deux bandes composées de quarante à quatre-vingts malfaiteurs ont fait leur apparition dans les districts de Belgradjik et d'Adlié. Poursuivis par la force publique ces bandits sont rentrés en Serbie non sans avoir emporté une grande quantité de bétail et d'objets.

Le 29 du même mois une quarantaine de brigands ont attaqué nuitamment Stop, village dépendant de Senitza. Après un feu d'armes assez prolongé les aggresseurs ont essayé de capturer certains Chrétiens soumis; mais cette tentative a échoué devant la résistance énergique du village, qui a fini par repousser l'attaque.

Dans cette affaire il y a eu deux hommes et autant de femmes blessés.

Pas plus tard que le lendemain le village d'Atmadjik (Novi-Varoch) recevait à son tour la visite d'une bande de Serbes. Cette fois c'est un Chrétien nommé Sava qui a eu à souffrir le plus de cette visite: les malfaiteurs l'ont cruellement battu et lui ont enlevé tous ses biens.

Ces sortes d'incursions, qui n'ont pas discontinué depuis le premier jour de la cessation des hostilités et qui portent de grands préjudices aux paisibles habitants des villages voisins, ne sauraient être tolérées plus longtemps. Les autorités Impériales manqueraient à leurs devoirs si elles se bornaient toujours à ne poursuivre les bandes que jusqu'à la ligne de démarcation.

En conséquence la Sublime Porte prie instamment MM. les Représentants des Puissances Médiatrices de vouloir bien inviter leurs Agents à Belgrade à faire les démarches nécessaires auprès du Gouvernement Serbe pour faire cesser un moment plus tôt un état de choses si incompatible avec les règles de l'armistice et si préjudiciable aux intérêts comme au repos des habitants des districts voisins. Dans le cas où le Gouvernement Serbe, sans tenir compte des représentations des Puissances, refuserait de prendre des mesures énergiques pour mettre immédiatement un terme à ces actes de brigandage, la Sublime Porte se verra dans la nécessité de donner des ordres aux autorités Impériales pour qu'elles aient à poursuivre les malfaiteurs au delà des lignes tracées par la Commission de la démarcation.

Sublime Porte, le 10 Janvier, 1877.

No. 293.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 26.)

(No. 52.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 19, 1877.

THE Grand Council held yesterday at the Porte consisted of rather more than 200 persons, including representatives of all the Christian communities.

The Patriarchs did not themselves attend, but were represented by Delegates.

The proceedings opened by a speech from Midhat Pasha, commencing with a historical sketch of the occurrences of the last eighteen months, and pointing out in the strongest language the calamities and dangers to which the Empire would be exposed by a war, in which not only Russia, but some other Power, might take part against them.

He said that not only would they get no money from Europe, but that they might be prevented from obtaining from abroad even the military supplies of which they had need.

The feelings of the Council were so decidedly against the pacific tendency shown by the Grand Vizier that at one moment a sort of clamour was raised against him, one of the most energetic of the warlike party being Mahmoud Pasha Damat, the brother-in-law of the Sultan, whose intrigues to supplant Midhat Pasha have of late been no secret.

With regard to the proposals of the Plenipotentiaries respecting the nomination of the Valis and the International Commission, the Council was absolutely unanimous in deciding upon their unqualified rejection.

The discussion turned chiefly upon proposals on which Midhat Pasha said the Government were disposed to continue the negotiations in the Conference.

They would agree to a peace with Servia on the basis of the *status quo ante*, leaving to the mediating Powers the appreciation of the conditions which they had thought themselves justified in putting forward, and in the case of Montenegro they would not be unwilling to make over to the Prince some of the mountainous districts on the borders.

The complete religious liberty asked by the Powers would be assented to without difficulty.

A gendarmerie, composed of Mussulmans and Christians would be formed, and the Government would employ foreign instructors to organize it.

The administration of justice was about to be reformed upon the basis, with some modifications, of the system proposed in the Conference.

As a guarantee for the execution of these and other reforms, which were the natural consequence of the Constitution, he was ready, formally and officially, to lay the Constitution before the Conference as embodying the principles which the Porte bound itself to carry out.

He was likewise ready to re-affirm the acceptance already given of the Andrassy Note, including the nomination of a Commission composed equally of Mussulmans and Christians which should watch over the execution of the reforms in Bosnia, the Herzegovina, and the Vilayets of the Danube and of Adrianople.

This proposal was strongly opposed by the more energetic of the extreme party, who urged that the communication of the Constitution to the Powers would give the latter the right of interference in the internal affairs of the country, but I do not learn that any positive decision was come to on the subject, and I imagine the Government still to be free to pursue the course desired by Midhat Pasha, which is, while rejecting the two obnoxious clauses, to leave the door open for further discussion in the Conference of all the rest.

In the course of the discussion an appeal was made to the Government by the Representative of one of the religious communities and supported by all the others.

He said that as the decisions about to be come to might lead to war, it was necessary to know the character that would be given to that war.

If it was to be a religious war the Christian populations could not be expected to sympathize in it, but if, on the contrary, it was to be a war for the honour and independence of the Empire in which they all felt an equal interest, then the Christians would join cordially with their Mussulman fellow subjects.

The members of the Ulema are said to have applauded this speech, answering, "You go to the Church and we to the Mosque, but we all worship the same God, and are subjects of the same Empire and mean to live as brothers."

I am told that the military members abstained entirely from taking part in the discussion.

The above is, as far as I have been able to collect it, from several of those who were present, the substance of what passed at this important Council, and I imagine it to be generally correct.

I inclose a memorandum of the discussion which I have obtained from a Christian Member of the Council, whom I have not myself seen, but whose account does not materially differ from what I have stated above.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 293.

Memorandum.

UN résumé, exposant la situation actuelle, ainsi que l'historique des circonstances qui ont précédé la réunion de la Conférence, a été lu au commencement de la séance. C'et exposé avait la forme d'un mémoire et était admirablement rédigé.

Le Grand Vézir prit ensuite la parole et communiqua à l'assemblée les premières propositions de la Conférence, ainsi que les modifications qui y ont été apportées, grâce aux efforts des Délégués Ottomans. Il a exposé ensuite le minimum constituant les dernières propositions des conférenciers et comprenant les deux points connus.

Dans un discours très éloquent et très détaillé Midhat Pacha a ensuite exposé la gravité des éventualités auxquelles un refus de la dernière proposition de la Conférence pouvait donner lieu. Il a tracé un tableau saisissant des calamités qui pouvaient un jour fondre sur l'Empire Ottoman. En un mot, il s'est montré plus qu'impartial, et il a été plein de déférence pour les vœux de l'Europe.

Malgré la popularité de son Altesse Midhat Pacha, la séance devint plus qu'orageuse. Il y eut un moment où une clameur générale s'éleva contre toute idée d'acceptation des deux points posés par la Conférence. Plusieurs personnes prirent la parole. Les Chrétiens qui s'étaient tû jusqu'à ce moment furent enfin interpellés, et moi nommément. Nous avons été tous unanimes pour le rejet de ces deux points, laissant le Ministère libre pour traiter sur d'autres bases avec l'Europe et lui donnant à ce propos un vote de confiance.

No. 294.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 26.)

(No. 6. Political.)
My Lord, *Galatz, January 17, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 5 of this series of the 12th instant, relative to the supply of provisions for the Russian army, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that Baron von Veraut has left for Kicheneff; he entered into no contracts here, and was, I believe, unprovided with sufficient money for such a purpose, but he has been collecting information, and has been over a large flour factory with the view of satisfying himself of its power of supply, and has had offers made him of oxen, &c., in case they should be required. His total purchases amounted to some thirty or forty cases of preserved meat, vegetables, &c., for the staff at Kicheneff.

A gentleman, who is interested in farming, lately received a communication from Russia, stating that in the event of the troops marching large stores would be required at Bucharest, and that in that case money would be provided and lodged with the Bank of Roumania, who would pay for all purchases made on Russian account.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PERCY SANDERSON.

No. 295.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 26.)

(No. 8.)
My Lord, *Athens, January 18, 1877.*

I AM told that a favourable impression has been produced here by the news that the Grand Vizier lately paid a visit to the Œcumenical Patriarch at Constantinople, and that his Highness expressed his hopes that the Greeks and Mussulmans would henceforth be united, and co-operate in the regeneration of their common country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

No. 296.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 26.)

(No. 12. Political.)
My Lord, *Bucharest, January 18, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship the text of a further communication which has been addressed by the Roumanian Government to the Porte in reply to the note of Safvet Pasha, dated January 7th, the substance of which latter has been submitted to your Lordship by Sir Henry Elliot, and of which his Excellency had the courtesy to forward to me a copy.

That the Porte will make a declaration in the sense desired by this Government is

extremely improbable, and indeed Prince Ghika has already telegraphed that the answer of Safvet Pasha will merely go over the same ground as the note of the 7th instant.

Your Lordship will notice that the inclosed speaks of capitulations between the Sublime Porte and "Roumanian Princes;" the latter words are not warranted by history, the name Roumania is of mushroom date, and the Conventions and Capitulations, as your Lordship will have seen in the inclosure contained in my despatch No. 7 of the 8th instant, were concluded between Princes of Wallachia and Moldavia.

The note of Safvet Pasha, dated the 7th of January, met in the most complete manner any alleged misunderstanding which this Government pretended to advance respecting the words "privileged provinces" and the position of the United Principalities under the Turkish Constitution, while the whole tenor of the communication entirely defeated the real object of the note of the Roumanian Government.

Had the Porte given way to the representations of this Government M. Bratiano could have gone to the Chamber and the press with the boast that they had compelled the Porte to retract the obnoxious expressions; on the other hand, had the Porte assumed a tone of irritation, this Cabinet would have blustered, threatened, and proposed that the tribute should be refused.

In either case the Ministry would have found elements for bolstering up their waning popularity, but the opportunity has disappeared, owing to the adroit phrases with which their protest has been answered by Safvet Pasha, and which really admit of no further discussion.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

Inclosure in No. 296.

Protest forwarded by the Roumanian Government in reply to the Note of Safvet Pasha, dated January 7, 1877.

QUE, au lieu d'une simple communication écrite, le Gouvernement Roumain désirerait, ainsi que le désire Safvet Pacha lui-même, être complétement édifié et rassuré.

Pour cela il demande une déclaration formelle du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté le Sultan portant sur les points suivants:—

1. Que la Roumanie n'est pas comprise parmi les provinces dont parle la Charte Ottomane.

2. Que les liens qui unissent la Roumanie à l'Empire Ottoman découlent des Capitulations intervenues entre les Princes Roumains et le Sultan, reconnues par l'Article II de la Convention de Paris 1858, et placées en conséquence sous la garantie collective des Puissances Garantes.

No. 297.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January 26.*)

(No. 13.)
My Lord, *Bucharest, January 19, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that the investigation by M. Burian, the Austrian Vice-Consul, who returned to Bucharest yesterday from Jassy and Vaslin, confirms the worst version of the late persecution of the Jews in Moldavia.

Ninety-five families, and, perhaps, even 120, from 60 communes, were expelled from their homes by order of the Prefect, M. Neron Lupascu, the brother of the Lupascu already notorious for the Galatz persecutions.

Representations having been made to the Central Government, orders were sent that the expelled Jews should be restored to their homes; but, in the meantime, their habitations had been let or assigned to other persons, and their effects, furniture, &c., pillaged, and disappeared.

M. Protopopesco having been sent from Bucharest to investigate the matter, was met at Jassy by the Prefect, Lupascu, of Vaslin, and was by him taken to localities where little or nothing had taken place, which gave rise to the official version, which I mentioned in my despatch No. 11 of the 16th instant.

It is currently reported that many families, on the payment, in bribes, of 25 ducats

per family (about 12*l.*), were not molested, and that had 2,000 ducats (about 900*l.*) been forthcoming, nothing would have happened.

Colonel Pencovitz, of the Statistical Department, has now been despatched to make an inquiry on the spot, and the Austrian Acting Agent has demanded the suspension of the Prefect Lupascu, to which the Roumanian Government has declined to accede, until the Report of Colonel Pencovitz shall have been received.

It would appear that some of the outrages in question occurred so far back as last November; but that, owing to the terrorism employed by the authorities, nothing transpired until the article in the "Pester Lloyd," some three weeks since; and, very recently, Jews, Austrian subjects, came to M. Bosizio, the Acting Agent, and told him that the whole story was much exaggerated, inferring that official action on his part might aggravate the evil.

I have waited to communicate to M. Jonesco your Lordship's despatch, directing me to make an unofficial but earnest representation to the Roumanian Government until I should have exact data with which to repel the official version, that the persecutions had been the subject of exaggeration; but I propose to wait upon the Minister this afternoon, and speak to him in the sense of your Lordship's instructions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 298.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January 26.*)

(No. 14. Political.)
My Lord, *Bucharest, January 20, 1877.*

IT may interest your Lordship to learn that a meeting was held on the 18th, the day before yesterday, of the Reds and so-called Liberal party, comprising a few Senators, about eighty members of the Lower Chamber, and others, sympathizers with them, to take into consideration the position of Roumania in the present crisis.

Prince John Ghika spoke at length, and, I am informed, with much ability, recommending disarmament and an absolute neutrality, relying upon the guarantees.

M. Demetre Sturdza, the late Minister of Public Works, followed much in the same strain: total disarmament, neutrality, vehement protestation against any violation of the Roumanian frontier, and the withdrawal of the Government to successive localities on the approach of invading armies, whether Turkish or Russian.

M. Bratiano made a violent peroration in a thoroughly Russian sense, and openly avowed his preference and desire for an engagement and arrangement with Russia.

Various other speakers succeeded, some faintly dissenting from M. Bratiano, but it appears that in the end the sense of the meeting exhibited an adhesion to M. Bratiano's opinions and policy, in the proportion of nearly two to one.

As I have on various occasions had the honour to mention to your Lordship, M. Bratiano has been for some time unreservedly inclining towards a Russian policy, but on no occasion has he so openly expressed his opinion as at the meeting in question.

M. Bratiano's more definite declaration of his views, at this important moment for Roumania, is the subject of much criticism, and many surmises are raised whether he will meet distinct opposition in the Senate, which meets after the recess on the 23rd instant.

There are also reports that one, if not more members of the Cabinet may retire.

M. Bratiano has hitherto been unable to fill up the place of Minister of Public Works, vacant by the resignation of M. Sturdza, and any further changes would probably entail the entire decomposition of the Ministry.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 299.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 26.)

(No. 15. Political.)
My Lord, *Bucharest, January* 20, 1877.

YOUR Lordship's telegram, stating that the report of further outrages on Jews in the neighbourhood of Jassy had been received in London, and directing me to make inquiries, communicate with Mr. St. John, and to take what measures are possible to protect the Jews, reached me last evening.

I have telegraphed to Mr. St. John to make every inquiry, and, within an hour of the receipt of the telegram, I communicated with the Austrian Acting Agent, who has been extremely active in the Vaslui case, owing to the circumstance that some twenty-five of the expelled families are Austrian subjects.

M. Bosizio has no information respecting further persecutions in the vicinity of Jassy, and seems disposed to think that the report may be a resuscitation of the Vaslui outrages.

I shall, however, make every endeavour to obtain information from persons at this place connected with Moldavia.

With reference to some of the statements made by Baron de Warms, which have appeared in the English newspapers, the Rev. Mr. Kleinhenn, the British Chaplain at Bucharest, and head of the mission for the conversion of the Jews in Roumania, a resident for many years in this country, is writing to the Earl of Shaftesbury to point out some of the more prominent inaccuracies in the statements of the Baron.

The outrages are glaring enough in themselves without the aid of exaggerations, which do injury to the case, in weakening the remonstrances of Her Majesty's and the Austrian Governments, and giving the Roumanian Minister the opportunity for saying that every idle rumour and exaggeration finds credence in London and Vienna.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 300.

*Mr. St. John to the Earl of Derby.**—(*Received January* 26, 5 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *January* 26, 1877, 4·35 P.M.

SERVIAN Minister for Foreign Affairs informs me that Prince Milan has received a communication from Grand Vizier inviting him to treat directly with the Porte for peace.

No. 301.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Taylour Thomson.

(No. 7.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 26, 1877.

THE Persian Minister called upon me this afternoon by appointment and expressed his fear, founded on information which had lately reached him, that intrigues were being carried on at Tehran to involve Persia in differences with the Porte, with the object of securing Persian assistance for Russia in the event of a war between the latter Power and Turkey. He was therefore, he said, very anxious to be able to assure his Government that they might count upon the support of England in the question which had been so long in dispute between Persia and Turkey—that of the boundary between the two countries. He thought that some hope of this kind held out to Persia might neutralize the effect of the inducements which were being offered her to assume an attitude hostile to Turkey.

I told Mulhom Khan that, setting aside for the moment the question in dispute between Persia and Turkey to which he had referred, I could not imagine a more suicidal act than that which the Persian Government could commit if they allowed themselves to be drawn into war as an ally of Russia. By so doing they would forfeit any support or sympathy which they might otherwise expect from England. Such a course, moreover, would tend to strengthen materially the Russian power in Asia, and that upon

* Repeated to Embassies except Paris.

the frontiers of Persia herself. The question seemed to me not one merely of the future prosperity of the country, but of its actual existence as an independent State. I thought, therefore, that his Government ought seriously to consider whether, for the sake of some trifling advantage in the settlement of a boundary question, they should run the risk of placing themselves in a state of dependence on Russia, which would be like that of Roumania or of Servia.

As for the question itself, my impression was that the long delay which had occurred in dealing with it had been caused quite as much by the action, or inaction, of his own Government as by that of the Porte. Nor did I think that the present was a very opportune moment for insisting on the immediate resumption of negotiations, when it was notorious that the attention of the Sultan's Ministers was fully occupied with matters of more immediate moment. At the same time I would bear in mind what he had said, and if I saw reason to believe that English interposition would be of use, I should be willing to offer it in a spirit of impartiality and with a view to an equitable settlement.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 302.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.

(No. 58.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, January* 26, 1877.

THE French Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and read to me a telegram from the Duc Decazes stating that the Turkish Ambassador had applied to the French Government to recommend to the Porte a Financier who should superintend reforms in the Ottoman Treasury, and also to furnish officers and sub-officers for the reorganization of the "zaptiehs" or police force. The French Government were informed that the Porte was also addressing a request to Her Majesty's Government for an English Financier, but they were not aware whether English officers were to be asked for to take part in the reform of the gendarmerie.

The Duc Decazes went on to say that the first point in question is not directly connected with those touched upon by the Conference, and that France has special interests which make it advisable for him to consider the request, and at least not to reject it without discussion. The second request, however, touches an essential point of the programme which was arrived at in common by the Powers, and to which the French Government wishes to adhere. They are not, therefore, prepared to entertain it without knowing what view is taken of the matter by other Governments. His Excellency inquired, in conclusion, whether Her Majesty's Government had received any similar communication from the Porte, and what answer we should be prepared to return to it.

I told M. d'Harcourt, in reply, that no such application had as yet been addressed to me, and that I was therefore unable to give a definitive opinion on the subject. Speaking merely my personal views, I thought that if the Porte showed a disposition substantially to carry into effect the more material of the reforms which had been urged upon it in the Conference, it would not be our policy to discourage or hinder such a course.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 303.

Consul Skene to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 27.)

(No. 4. Political.)
My Lord, *Aleppo, January* 9, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of my despatch of January 9 reporting to Sir Henry Elliot on the inefficiency of the Police Department, and the Courts of Justice in this province.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

Inclosure in No. 303.

Consul Skene to Sir H. Elliot.

Aleppo, January 9, 1877.

Sir,

THE Governor-General of this province, having informed me of remonstrances made to him by several of my colleagues with respect to the inefficiency of the Police Department, I have the honour to report to your Excellency on the subject, as there is little doubt that it will be brought under the notice of the Porte by means of the reports of other Consuls here.

I told the Governor-General that I consider the complaints he had received to be fully borne out by the almost daily occurrence of robberies, and that it is universally believed that the police connive at such crimes.

His Excellency answered that he could not do otherwise than employ the people of the country, and that, were he to dismiss the whole Police force, it would have to be replaced by men equally bad, if not worse. He added that he has not the means of paying them regularly, and that the temptation to take bribes from robbers is very strong when a man, possibly having a family to support, does not receive his pay.

In a recent case of housebreaking, the neighbours saw four men in the uniform of the police escaping from the terraced roof. The Chief of the Police, Izzet Aga, came here a few years ago without the means of living, and he is now believed to have not less than 20,000*l.* invested at interest, while his pay is only 120*l.* per annum.

Last week a Dragoman of the British Vice-Consulate of Alexandretta, Mr. Tajer, was robbed here at early dawn of 800*l.* in gold. A servant met and spoke to the robber when he was leaving the house; people in the street saw him running away; and the workmen of a mill, in which he was employed, gave evidence that he left it shortly before the robbery took place, and returned soon after it, apparently breathless from running: while he denied having been absent from the mill at all. He was arrested and identified by all these witnesses; yet he is favoured in every possible way by the police and by the tribunal trying him, and no exertion whatever is made to recover the money. The obvious inference to be drawn from such facts is, that the Dragoman's gold is purchasing protection for the robber of it. I am using my utmost endeavours to obtain justice in this instance, and the Governor-General has evidently a strong feeling in favour of justice; but I am nevertheless convinced that the money is lost to its rightful owner, and that the prisoner will soon be free to enjoy what remains of it, after paying for impunity.

The housebreakers and thieves of Aleppo are in nearly all cases Mussulmans, and their victims Christians or Jews. The Jewish quarter of the town is closed at eight o'clock in the evening; and from sunset till that hour robbers prowl in its streets to stop all who pass, and take their money and watches from them. I have not heard of any one being arrested there by the police. No complaints are made, however, as it is the practice of the Jews to suffer loss rather than incur enmity by complaining. When they know the robber, they fear worse treatment by denouncing him; when they do not recognize him, they are aware of the uselessness of applying for assistance from the police to find him out; and, in both alternatives, they feel sure that he will not be punished, while they may. It once happened that a police officer, to whom it was reported that a Mussulman and a Jew were fighting, ordered that the Jew should be taken to prison, without listening to any particulars. They therefore prefer the lesser evil of silence on the subject of their losses when they cannot avoid them, as they did during the insurrection of the year 1850, by secretly presenting 2,000*l.* to the insurgents in lieu of plunder.

The lamentable condition of the Police Department in this province gives rise to the apprehension that, should serious disturbances occur, no reliance can be placed on it, and that the only hope of being able to repress them and give protection to the non-Mussulman population is based on the hypothetical fidelity of the regular troops, who are themselves beginning to show a hostile feeling towards the Christian and Jewish inhabitants. There is no reason to suspect the zeal and energy of the chief authorities, either civil or military, but it is certain that the Mussulmans of the town, both in office and in private life, are ill-disposed, and that discipline is no longer so perfect as it used to be in the Turkish army. It appears to me disturbed by the political agitation which has been rife during the year 1876 and still continues.

With regard to the Tribunal mentioned above, I can only report to your Excellency that nothing could be less satisfactory than the working of the Medjlis organization at Aleppo. The presence of Christian and Jewish members has no effect in counteracting

the evils complained of. Their election is, in the first place, altogether illusory, for they are actually chosen by the influential Mussulmans; and, secondly, the equality of their number with that of the Mussulman members is a principle in theory which is defeated in practice.

In the Provincial Council (Idaret Medjlissi), for instance, two Christian and two Mussulman members have been appointed by so-called election, and there are five official members, the Accountant-General (Defterdar), the Secretary-General (Mektubji), the Director of Pious Foundations (Evkaf Naziri), the Judge (Naïb), and the Expounder of Law (Mufti), on whose pernicious influence I had the honour of reporting to your Excellency in my despatch of the 30th ultimo. There are thus seven Mussulman members and two non-Mussulman members of the Provincial Council.

The Court of Appeal (Divani-Temiz) is composed of three Mussulman and three non-Mussulman members with a Mussulman President, who is the Judge (Naïb), but the three non-Mussulman members have been carefully chosen as ignorant and time-serving men, who could not, and would not, offer any opposition to the opinion or wish of the Mussulman members.

The Ordinary Tribunal (Daavi Medjlissi) is similarly constituted and conducted, but as it has to judge new causes, the influence of the non-Mussulman members is still further neutralized in it by the Mussulman members, who, contrary to the rule laid down, insist on passing sentence according to the Coranic Law (Sheraï), in which the others are not versed, and which accepts neither circumstantial evidence nor Christian witnesses. This is the Tribunal which is trying the robbery case of the British Dragoman, the evidence in whose favour is all circumstantial, and the witnesses all Christian. The robber cannot be condemned without the deposition of two Mussulman witnesses, who declare that they saw him take the money, which complete *reductio ad absurdum* would be almost impossible in the house of a Christian.

The Municipal Council (Medjlis Beladieh) has two non-Mussulman and three Mussulman members, with a Mussulman President, making a relative proportion of four to two.

To illustrate the mode of proceeding of this Council, I may mention one of its recent acts, which was to close all the shops of the bakers of common bread in the town, and thus deprive the poorer classes of the population of bread for a week, until an arrangement was concluded with them by some means or other.

The Commercial Tribunal (Tidjaret Medjlissi) has an equal number of Mussulman and non-Mussulman members, with a Mussulman President, and an equal proportion of European to Ottoman members when European law suits with Ottoman subjects are brought before it.

Of this Tribunal little can be said beyond the fact that it never comes to any decision of any law suit whatsoever.

The Governor-General strives conscientiously and perseveringly to bring all these Councils and Tribunals to a more efficient state, but his well-meaning efforts are fruitless.

To correct their defects, a more independent control would be required, for no Governor-General, unaided by some such control, can ever escape from the baneful influence of the leading Mussulmans of the town, who have it in their power to procure his recall by a collective address to the Grand Vizier, while they can also maintain him in office by a laudatory Memorial. The Porte should not encourage this practice, which maims and cripples the energies of the best-intentioned provincial ruler.

I cannot, therefore, in common fairness attempt to hold responsible a Governor-General for the many shortcomings of his provincial administration.

Although I try never to neglect my Consular duty of endeavouring to protect, to the best of my ability, all interests committed to my charge, still I must say that it is rarely with much confidence of being able to succeed under the existing circumstances of the Ottoman Empire, and I firmly believe that every other Consul here feels the same consciousness of the want of assistance from Constantinople when justice has to be obtained.

Consular success might be greatly facilitated by a cordial understanding between the several Consuls to act together in extreme cases, so that their united strength might be brought to bear on unruly authorities by reporting in the same sense to the different Embassies and Legations, which might convince the Porte of the expediency of removing them or reorganizing their Department. But, during the twenty years that I have been here, I have never found it possible to keep on such terms with any of my colleagues, excepting the French Consul. All the others, being natives, seem to think it necessary to strengthen their doubtful position by a wretched spirit of rivalry, which proves often

destructive of the interests protected by the Consuls whom they oppose. Thus, if one exposes the injustice or inactivity of a Tribunal, a reference is made to another, who represents it to be immaculate, and the course complained against is followed by the Tribunal with renewed confidence, to the great detriment of those whose causes are pending before it.

If I might venture to offer a suggestion, I would respectfully point out that no measure could tend more effectually and rapidly to improve provincial administration in all its branches than a joint action on the part of the Representatives of the European Powers at Constantinople to make it one of the duties of their Consuls to co-operate collectively for the good of the country, and I take the liberty of expressing this opinion as a result of long experience in this and other provinces of Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

No. 304.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 27.)

(No. 7. Confidential.)
Tiflis, January 14, 1877.

My Lord,

RUSSIAN officer in charge of battery of Ozurget is very young; he has received written orders in case of defeat to return with his guns to Tiflis. Russians appear very uncertain of result of expected campaign. There are, it is reported, more guns placed to the south-west of Poti, so as to bear on sea, but they can be enfiladed from road along the shore from Batum.

Russians fear war with England, and it is their intention, should this happen, to send their fleet to the American ports for shelter; from these they are to attack our traders. It would be a great advantage to Turkey if the Kurds could be organized so as to be useful as regulars; they would probably furnish from 50,000 to 100,000 men, and could act against Russia. In Asia Minor it is to be hoped that this will not be neglected by the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. T. RICKETTS.

P.S.—Further information shows six batteries at Tiflis, namely, four 4-pounders, and two 9-pounders.

There are also two batteries to Kutais, and one battery of 4-pounders to Goi, for some other place. Great activity in arsenal, making cartridges, several thousand men at work there.

G. T. R.

No. 305.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January 27.)

Constantinople, le 25 Janvier, 1877.

(Télégraphique.)

LE Gouvernement Impérial, animé de sentiments de vif intérêt envers la Serbie et le Monténégro, désire éviter une nouvelle effusion de sang à l'expiration prochaine de l'armistice et, à cet effet, il a pris l'initiative d'une démarche de paix.

Voici le télégramme Véziriel qui vient d'être adressé à ce sujet aux Princes de Servie et de Monténégro :—

« Votre Altesse voudra bien se rappeler que c'est à sa demande que les Puissances ont entrepris leurs bons offices près de la Sublime Porte pour amener un armistice, et que le Gouvernement Impérial, toujours animé des mêmes sentiments de modération et de conciliation, n'a pas hésité à accorder cet armistice, qui a été depuis lors deux fois renouvelé, dans l'espoir de faciliter ainsi la conclusion de la paix et d'éviter une effusion de sang inutile. Le moment n'est pas loin où, par suite de l'expiration du dernier armistice, les hostilités devront être reprises au grand dommage des contrées qui vont en être le théâtre. Je me demande si un effort loyal et sincère ne devrait pas être fait de part et d'autre pour écarter cette douloureuse éventualité. Dans cette pensée toute de raison et d'humanité, et d'ailleurs convaincu que votre Altesse professe

au même degré l'amour de la paix, et le désir de mettre fin à une lutte aussi regrettable et aussi désastreuse, je viens franchement à elle pour la convier personnellement à une entente avec le Gouvernement Impérial au moyen de négociations directes.

(Signé) "MIDHAT."

Nous espérons que les Puissances Garantes voudront bien apprécier cette démarche spontanée, qui témoigne des sentiments d'humanité de la Sublime Porte. Je dois ajouter qu'un fonctionnaire du Gouvernement Impérial partira demain pour Belgrade, chargé de faire des ouvertures à la Servie en vue de l'engager à s'entendre avec la Cour Suzeraine pour rétablir la paix.

No. 306.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January 27.)

(Télégraphique.)
(Confidentielle.) *Sublime Porte, le 25 Janvier*, 1877.

REÇU télégramme No. spécial 36.

Veuillez remercier Lord Derby, au nom de la Sublime Porte, pour ses conseils amicaux dont nous apprécions toute la valeur, et pour les dispositions bienveillantes dont il est animé à notre égard.

Déjà avant la réception du télégramme précité de votre Excellence, notre situation vis-à-vis de la Servie était devenue l'objet de notre sérieuse attention. La fin prochaine de l'armistice nous mettra dans la nécessité de poursuivre les hostilités avec tous les avantages que nous assure la supériorité de notre armée sur les troupes démoralisées, presque complètement, de la Servie. Notre tâche, rendue ainsi facile, exposerait la Servie à toutes les calamités d'une guerre dont le champ s'étendrait à tout le territoire de la Principauté. Ainsi, nous envisageons cette perspective avec d'autant plus de répugnance que, si la conclusion de la paix sur les bases d'un *statu quo ante* pourrait encore aujourd'hui être acceptée, elle deviendrait impossible devant la surexcitation des esprits que les nouvelles victimes ne manqueraient pas de produire parmi nous.

Ainsi, encouragée par l'avis suggéré par Lord Derby, la Sublime Porte vient de décider de faire des ouvertures bienveillantes à la Servie en vue de l'engager à s'entendre avec la Cour Suzeraine pour rétablir la paix. Nous envoyons, à cet effet, Pertew Effendi, fonctionnaire de l'Empire, auprès du Prince Milan. Toutefois, pour sauvegarder la dignité du Gouvernement Impérial, nous croyons attribuer à la mission de Pertew Effendi l'objet ostensible de l'échange des prisonniers, mais dont le mandat réel sera d'amener le Gouvernement Serbe, par une sage appréciation de ses véritables intérêts, à conclure la paix avec la Sublime Porte sur les bases qui pourraient être acceptées.

Veuillez prier Lord Derby de transmettre à son Agent à Belgrade des instructions confidentielles en vue de disposer le Gouvernement Serbe à faire bon accueil à une démarche de haute sollicitude. Quant aux réformes Constitutionnelles, vous pouvez assurer sa Seigneurie que nous nous sommes mis sincèrement à l'œuvre, et que l'Europe ne tardera pas à constater le résultat de nos efforts.

No. 307.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 27.)

(No. 57.)
Paris, January 26, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Due Decazes told me this morning that the Ottoman Ambassador, Sadiz Pasha, had made to him on the 23rd instant two pressing requests.

The first was that the French Government would send ten gendarmes of high character and efficiency to Constantinople to assist the Porte in organizing a military police.

The second was that the French Government would appoint an able financial officer to act as controller of the Ottoman finances, in conjunction with an English colleague, whom Her Majesty's Government would be asked to appoint in the same manner.

With regard to the first request, the Duke had, he said, pointed out to Sadiz Pasha

that it intrenched upon a matter which had been treated in the Conference at Constantinople. He had, he told me, proceeded to observe that it had always been contemplated by the Conference that the new Turkish Gendarmérie should be recruited from neutral States, rather than from any or all the six Guaranteeing Countries; and he had commented upon the want of delicacy evinced, no doubt unconsciously, by the Porte in making a separate application on such a question to the Government of one of these countries. He had added that he could not take the request into consideration until he had consulted the other Powers.

Having given me this account of what he had said to Sadyk Pasha, the Duke informed me that he had sent orders by telegraph to the French Representatives in London, Berlin, Rome, St. Petersburg and Vienna to enter into communication with the Governments to which they were accredited, upon their application from the Porte for French gendarmes.

The Duke went on to say to me that the other request made by Sadyk Pasha seemed to stand upon a different footing. France and England had, he observed, a special interest in the Turkish finances, which did not extend in at all the same degree to other Powers. In fact, almost the whole of the Turkish Stock was held in our two countries, and the interests of thousands of our countrymen were bound up with the credit of Turkey. Under these circumstances he should be loth to repel absolutely a proposal which might ultimately prove beneficial to large numbers of Frenchmen and Englishmen. It was true that in principle both the French and English Governments held that people who lent money to foreign States did so at their own risk, and were not entitled to call upon their Governments to interfere in their behalf. But if the Porte asked the Governments of England and France to their aid in re-organizing its finances, it at the same time conferred upon those Governments the right of laying down the conditions on which that aid should be given. Now, on the one hand, in the interest of Turkey as well as in the interests of their own subjects, the first condition insisted upon by France and England would certainly be that a strenuous and honest endeavour should be made by the Porte to discharge its obligations to its creditors; while, on the other hand, it could hardly be doubted that the Porte would very much increase the means of providing for the interest of its debts, if it placed its finances under the control of able English and French officers.

But although decidedly of opinion that this application from the Porte should not be hastily set aside, the Duke had not, he told me, thought it right to express assent to it in speaking to Sadig Pasha. He had suggested that the Porte had already at hand able financial councillors in the French and English Directors of the Imperial Ottoman Bank at Constantinople, but Sadig Pasha had rejoined that the Porte wished for persons of much more importance. Upon this the Duke had, he said, observed to Sadig Pasha that he must take time to reflect upon the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 308.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 27.)

(No. 58.)
Paris, January 26, 1877.

My Lord,

WHEN the Duc Decazes spoke to me this morning of the requests made by the Porte for French gendarmes and for French and English Financial Controllers, I asked him whether he did not think it imprudent of the Porte to make separate applications of this kind to particular Powers at a moment when it was of paramount importance to avoid giving umbrage to public opinion in Russia.

The Duke answered that we have reason to hope that the Russian Government would not object to the employment by the Porte of French and English officers of approved financial capacity to control the Turkish Treasury. At all events, he remembered that when he had suggested such an arrangement two years ago, General Ignatiew had expressed his approval of it.

As regarded the application for French gendarmes, the Duke said that he entirely agreed with me that it was an unwise and hazardous proceeding, and that he had not concealed this opinion from Sadig Pasha.

The Turks were, however, the Duke feared, doing much worse than this. He was informed by his Consul that they were preparing an attack upon the Mirdites in the neighbourhood of Montenegro. In answer to a remonstrance from him, Sadig Pasha had had recourse to the tactics usual with Turkish diplomatists, and had denied the fact. The Duke had proceeded to give him the details of the information received by the French Government, and he had admitted that if it was correct, the conduct of the Turkish authorities had been, in fact, imprudent.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 309.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 27.)

(No. 59.)
Paris, January 26, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Duc Decazes told me this morning that, in consequence of a report which he had received from the Marquis d'Harcourt of a conversation with your Lordship, he had advised the Porte, through Sadig Pasha, the Ottoman Ambassador here, to lose no time in making peace with Servia and Montenegro.

The Duke went on to say that he thought the difficulty of making peace between Turkey and Servia lay rather at Belgrade than at Constantinople. If he was correctly informed, Prince Milan was so much depressed by the misfortunes which had beset him as to be unable to take any decided resolution. It might, the Duke thought, be advisable to take steps at Belgrade to urge the Servians to come to a settlement with the Porte.

The Prince of Montenegro was, the Duc Decazes thought, a more able politician than Prince Milan, and, moreover, in a better position to make terms with the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 310.

*The Earl of Derby to Mr. Jocelyn.**

(Telegraphic.)
Foreign Office, January 27, 1877, 5·15 P.M.

THE Turkish Ambassador has communicated to me a telegram which the Grand Vizier has addressed to the Princes of Servia and Montenegro, proposing direct negotiations for peace.

I have expressed the great satisfaction of Her Majesty's Government at the step thus taken.

No. 311.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Jocelyn.†

(Telegraphic.)
Foreign Office, January 27, 1877, 5·45 P.M.

WITH reference to my previous telegram, the Turkish Ambassador informs me that Portew Effendi will be sent by the Porte to Belgrade ostensibly to arrange an exchange of prisoners, but in reality to negotiate terms of peace.

The Porte asks that the British Agent at Belgrade may receive confidential instructions to induce the Servian Government to receive these overtures favourably.

I have sent instructions in this sense, assuming that the basis of negotiation is substantially the *status quo*.

No. 312.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 27.)

(Telegraphic.)
Vienna, January 27, 1877.

I HAVE informed Monson by telegraph that the Grand Vizier has addressed telegrams to the Princes of Servia and Montenegro, proposing negotiations for peace.

The papers report that M. Wesselitsky has left Vienna for Ragusa.

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* A similar telegram was sent to Mr. St. John.

† A similar telegram was sent to Mr. St. John with last paragraph altered as follows:—"You will do what is in your power to secure this object, assuming that the basis of negotiation is substantially the *status quo*."

No. 313.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, January* 27, 1876, 6 P.M.

THE Turkish Ambassador has communicated to me a telegram which the Grand Vizier has addressed to the Princes of Servia and Montenegro, proposing direct negotiations for peace. I have expressed the great satisfaction of Her Majesty's Government at the steps thus taken.

Inform Mr. Monson, with reference to my previous instruction, as to the advice he should give in such an event.

No. 314.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 24.) *Foreign Office, January* 27, 1877.

Sir,

THE Turkish Ambassador has communicated to me a telegram addressed by the Grand Vizier to the Prince of Montenegro and to the Prince of Servia, in which direct negotiations for peace are made on behalf of the Porte. I informed his Excellency that Her Majesty's Government felt great satisfaction at learning that this step had been taken.

I should wish your Excellency to give this information to Mr. Monson, who has correctly interpreted my instructions by preparing to start at once for Cettigné, and is aware of the nature of the advice which he will give to Prince Nicholas on the part of Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 315.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Jocelyn.

(No. 41.) *Foreign Office, January* 27, 1877.

Sir,

THE Turkish Ambassador has this day communicated to me two telegrams which he has received from his Government.

The first of these messages gives the text of a telegram addressed by the Grand Vizier to the Princes of Servia and Montenegro, inviting them to come to an understanding with the Porte by means of direct negotiations as to the terms of a definitive peace.

Safvet Pasha expresses a hope that the Guaranteeing Powers will appreciate this step, which gives evidence of the humane disposition of the Porte, and he adds that an official of the Turkish Government will at once leave for Belgrade to open negotiations with Servia.

In the second telegram, which is marked "Confidential," Safvet Pasha, after speaking of the aversion with which, on grounds of humanity, the Porte regards the prospect of a resumption of hostilities with Servia, remarks that this repugnance is increased by the consideration that, if the conclusion of peace on the basis of the *status quo ante* might still be accepted under present circumstances, such an arrangement would be rendered impossible by the excitement which would be roused in Turkey by fresh bloodshed. The Porte, therefore, encouraged by the advice of Her Majesty's Government, has decided on making overtures to Servia for the re-establishment of peace.

For this purpose Pertew Effendi has been charged to proceed to Belgrade. In order to save the dignity of the Imperial Government his ostensible object will be to arrange an exchange of prisoners, but his real mission will be to induce the Servian Government, by a wise appreciation of its true interests, to conclude peace with the Sublime Porte on bases which can be accepted. Safvet Pasha requests that confidential instructions may be forwarded to Her Majesty's Agent at Belgrade to prepare the Servian Government to give this overture a favourable reception.

With regard to the Constitutional reforms, Musurus Pasha is authorized to assure me that the Turkish Government have set to work in earnest, and that Europe will shortly recognize the result of their efforts.

I expressed to Musurus Pasha the great satisfaction of Her Majesty's Government at the step which the Porte has taken towards Servia and Montenegro, and I have sent instructions to Her Majesty's Agent at Belgrade in the sense desired, on the understanding that the terms proposed by the Porte will be substantially based upon the *status quo*.

I have also informed Mr. Monson, through Her Majesty's Embassy at Vienna, of the telegram addressed by the Grand Vizier to the Prince of Montenegro, referring him to the instructions already addressed to him as to the advice he is to give in such an eventuality.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 316.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 27, night.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, January* 27, 1877.

MONSON informs me by telegraph that he intends going to Montenegro next Tuesday, together with Prince's Secretary and Prussian Colonel sent confidentially by Prince Bismarck.

No. 317.

Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 27, at night.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January* 27, 1877, 6·45 P.M.

RUSSIAN Ambassador quitted Constantinople this morning in Imperial yacht bound for the Piræus, owing to bad weather in the Black Sea. German, Austrian, and French Ambassadors also left to-day. Italian Minister will probably remain until Tuesday.

No. 318.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, January* 27, 1877.

I HAVE sent Monson instructions in conformity with reference to your telegram of to-day; and with respect to one from him, asking whether you wish him to go to Montenegro or to write to Prince Nicolas, I have informed him your Lordship evidently intends him to visit Cettigné.

He states in the same telegram that he hears very much from his German colleague of Italian intrigues in Albania.

No. 319.

Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

(Telegraphic.) *Pera, January* 27, 1877, 11 P.M.

GRAND VIZIER informed me this afternoon that he had telegraphed to Princes of Servia and Montenegro in conciliatory language, which he trusted would prove effectual in bringing about negotiation for peace.

With Servia he would be ready to treat on the basis of the *status quo ante*, and he anticipated no serious difficulty in coming to an understanding with Montenegro.

His Highness appeared especially anxious for success in the case of Servia, fearing apparently that, were the Turkish troops forced by circumstances to enter and overrun the Principalities at the expiration of the armistice, popular feeling might insist on conditions of peace considered too onerous by the Powers.

Agents sent by the Porte into the two Principalities to negotiate for an exchange of prisoners were authorized to prepare the way for a peaceable solution.

No. 320.

Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

(Telegraphic.) *Pera, January 28, 1877, noon.*

UPON my speaking to Grand Vizier to-day upon importance of commencing execution of the promised reforms in insurgent Provinces without delay, His Highness declared that this would be done within a week or ten days, referring to division and organization of districts (cantons) and to the appointment of Mudirs and Mayors, as suggested by the proposals of the Conference.

He has determined to form a new vilayet extending over districts of Novi-Bazar, Nisch, Prisrend, Uskup, and Kossova, the seat of Government being at Pristina, and the Governor designated being either Said Pasha, formerly in Cyprus, or Kiamil Pasha, formerly in high position in Syria, both able and intelligent men, and conversant with French.

A second new vilayet will comprehend the present district of Constantinople, Ismid, and the Dardanelles, while that of the Archipelago will for the future be governed by Rhodes.

Bosnia will, as formerly, include the Herzegovina, and Constant Effendi, a Christian, will be appointed Musteehar or Sub-Governor to the Governor-General; and it is His Highness' intention to appoint Christian Sub-Governors generally in the other Provinces.

He could not, he said, at present find any Christian eligible for the post of Governor except Savas Pasha, whom he was about to appoint in that capacity to the Archipelago.

No. 321.

Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 28, 1877, 12:30 P.M.*

WHILST I was with the Grand Vizier yesterday, a telegram was brought in from the Porte's Agent at Cettigné, containing the reply of the Prince of Montenegro to the telegram of the Grand Vizier. It expressed His Highness's gratification at finding a disposition for peace on the part of the Porte, and alleged, as an excuse for not answering it himself, the absence of his private secretary from Cettigné.

The Agent adds that immediately upon receipt of the Grand Vizier's telegram, an active telegraphic correspondence took place between the Prince and St. Petersburgh, and that he considers His Highness's position as difficult, having to choose between peace and a continuance of the struggle in the hope of an approaching occupation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina by Austria; that His Highness continues to be guided by the counsels of Russian Consul, and that large quantities of wheat and Indian corn are being brought into the Principality, apparently furnished by Russian Government.

No. 322.

Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

(Telegraphic.) *Pera, January 28, 1877, 1·15 P.M.*

MR. BARING reports that Metto Bektash, one of the leaders of the Batak massacre, has been condemned to death.

No. 323.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, January 28, 1877.*

I HAVE acquainted Baron Orczy with the satisfaction expressed by Her Majesty's Government with the communication made by the Porte to Servia and Montenegro.

Count Andrassy appears to have made no observation when Turkish Ambassador here communicated to him the telegram of the Grand Vizier, and Baron Orczy explains this reserve by observing that the Powers cannot interfere in the matter.

I said that your Lordship had, however, considered it expedient to advise Prince of Montenegro to meet overtures made to him in a conciliatory spirit, and to come to terms with the Porte.

Prince Milan has telegraphed to Constantinople his readiness to negotiate; and the Grand Vizier has been requested to send his proposals to the Turkish Ambassador here, and to authorize his communicating respecting them with M. Zuhitz, the Servian Agent.

When Turkish Ambassador spoke with Count Andrassy on the subject some days ago, his Excellency said that before taking any further action in the question, he must see the Memorandum which Prince Gortchakow is said to be preparing.

No. 324.

Mr. St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

(Telegraphic.) *Belgrade, January 28, 1877.*

PRINCE MILAN sent yesterday spontaneously a favourable reply to Grand Vizier, proposing that negotiations for peace should be carried on by the Turkish Ambassador and Servian Agent at Vienna.

Hope is expressed that Her Majesty's Government will use its influence at Constantinople in order that the conditions can be accepted by Servia.

Decision of Prince of Montenegro not known here yet, but a favourable reply is expected, both countries being anxious for peace.

No. 325.

Colonel Maude to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 29.)

(No. 2. Political.)

Warsaw, January 9, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose, for your Lordship's information, a translation of an address which was recently presented by the leading Polish nobility to the Emperor of Russia, and for which His Majesty has been pleased to express his thanks.

The principal political significance which appears to attach itself to this address is found in the fact that therein, for the first time since the insurrection of 1863, have Poles been allowed to designate themselves as such in an official document, and also that the Address has been graciously accepted, although conveyed in the Polish language.

But since the address was presented, which was shortly after my arrival here, I have perceived a considerable revulsion of feeling with regard to the Servian question, even among the Russian military society of this capital. Whereas, in the beginning of last month enthusiasm was expressed on behalf of the oppressed Sclavonians, and I was alone in the belief that war was not certain and imminent; now the feeling is very general that war, on this account on the part of Russia, would be an egregious mistake. I have heard officers of high rank express their regret that His Majesty should have committed himself so deeply by his Moscow speech as to render it difficult to withdraw with honour from the promises which he then held out, as to the independent action of Russia.

That Russian officers should speak in this way to me is, I submit, a significant proof of the change of feeling upon the subject.

In a recent interview which I had the honour of holding with the Governor-General of Poland, Count Kotzebue, his Excellency was very careful to explain to me the impossibility of the invasion of the Danubian provinces earlier than the month of May, owing to the entire absence, in those districts, of forage for horses and cattle.

As Count Kotzebue is one of the most highly esteemed generals, and most trusted advisers of the Emperor, and as he only returned from an official visit to St. Petersburgh on the 5th instant, and as he informed me that he has a personal knowledge of the Danubian Principalities, his opinion would appear to be of the more value, as showing the tenor of the mind of the Russian Government at this juncture.

I have also been put into possession of the contents of some letters, written from the neighbourhood of Kischenew to relations in Warsaw. In one case, a Jewish private soldier writes to his mother that he and his comrades are suffering the greatest privations from want of food and and shelter; that they have had no change of clothes for more than six weeks, and that they are being literally devoured by vermin, which are eating

into their flesh; that their condition is so pitiable and so desperate, that they do not care what befals them, so much so that this state of things has led to acts of violence and mutiny on the part of the troops, followed by the shooting of several of the ringleaders.

In another letter, the writer, who is a nobleman owning considerable property in that district, reports that in all the towns in his neighbourhood military executions have taken place; and in one case which came under his notice, a soldier shot his officer on parade.

A lady, who has recently returned from that neighbourhood, states that she herself saw the soldiers begging by the roadside.

I also learn, from what I consider to be a reliable source, that inflammatory hand-bills are being largely distributed in that district, of which the town of Kico is the centre, calling upon the peasants to rise and massacre their Polish masters, and inciting them also to rebellion against the Tsarz.

Meantime, as is natural, the warm advocacy with which Russia has espoused the cause of religious and political freedom in the Danubian provinces of Turkey is being very generally commented upon here in all ranks of society, and unfavourable comparisons are drawn between the measures of liberty which she is demanding for the Servians, and those which she allows to her Polish subjects.

I have also heard, from other sources, that grave shortcomings have been discovered in the Russian Control Department, and it has been said to me that extensive incendiarism of stores may be expected, whereby the traces of official defalcations may be obliterated. However correct the latter surmise may be, and apart from the defects of organization, there can be no doubt that the Russian Empire contains within itself numerous elements of weakness, and by no means the least important of these would appear to be the fact that Russia cannot spare a single regiment from the 70,000 of her best troops with which she garrisons the Kingdom of Poland, even when the question at issue is the protection of the Sclavonic race, and is one which has the professed sympathy of at least the magnates among the Polish Sclaves. Everything which I see and hear, except, I am bound to say, the general opinion of Society, appears to render it highly improbable that Russia will engage in a war at this juncture with the Ottoman Porte, large as have been, and still continue to be, her military preparations.

Should such a war take place, the consequences to this Empire can hardly fail to prove most disastrous, both politically and financially.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS C. MAUDE.

Inclosure in No. 325.

Address of Poles to the Emperor of Russia, December 1876.

Most gracious Lord,

THE words pronounced by your Imperial Majesty in Moscow found an echo in our hearts, and we Poles join heartily in the sentiments of loyalty to the Throne, the expressions of which reach you, most gracious Lord, from every part of your Empire.

If the elevated endeavours of your Imperial Majesty, tending to spare humanity the calamities of war, were to remain unsuccessful, we shall be ready to undergo all offerings which you will consider to be necessary from your people, to better the condition of our southern brethren.

Belonging to the great family of the Sclavonic nations, with the rest of the brethren of our race, we shall surround you, most gracious Lord, with perfect submission, to enable you to carry out the great objects at which you aim.

This sincere expression of sentiments of your Imperial Majesty's loyal subjects we dare to lay at the feet of your Throne.

No. 326.

Colonel Maude to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 29.)

(No. 3. Political.)
My Lord, *Warsaw, January* 16, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report for your Lordship's information, that considerable consternation has been caused in this city, within the past two or three days, by the

inquiries which have been made by the police, as to the capacity of each house for the billeting of troops therein.

Arrangements have been made for the accommodation of 60,000 men in this manner, and suitable localities have been selected for cooking places for the troops.

I am led to believe, however, that the above is only a precautionary measure, in the event of certain contingencies requiring the concentration of troops upon either the German or Austrian frontier, and that it is not in contemplation to make any such movement at the present time.

For this reason I have not thought it desirable to telegraph to your Lordship, as I should have done if any such movement of troops appeared imminent.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS C. MAUDE.

No. 327.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 29.)

(No. 8.)
(Decypher.)
My Lord, *Tiflis, January* 16, 1876.

IN my despatch No. 5, I have mentioned the total Russian army on frontier as being near 91,000 men; this statement has been made from the report given by Captain Syall and other sources.

The total army of the Caucassian capable of being employed offensively, as will be shown in a report which I intended sending as soon as an opportunity offers, may be taken as 104 battalions, 112 squadrons, and 39 batteries. If these are reckoned at 640, 100, and 150 respectively, it will give 83,430 men. If they be reckoned at maximum of 840,128 and 622 respectively, it will give 114,000 men. It will be noticed, therefore, that the number given in my despatch No. 5, namely, 91,000, ranges between these two figures.

The number of the force actually present might be more, but if so, I think that it would not exceed 100,000 at present.

It must be remembered that there is a road running parallel to the frontier, and that these troops can be massed on one or more points without much difficulty. No further reinforcements arrived 17th.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. C. RICKETTS.

No. 328.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 29.)

(No. 10. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Athens, January* 20, 1877.

I HAVE been informed by my Ottoman colleague that within the last three or four days the Cretan refugees, who reside here, have been required by the two Committees, under whose guidance they act, to renew their oath of brotherhood, and to be prepared to take up arms at the first signal.

Photiades Bey connects this movement amongst the Cretans with an assemblage of Christians which lately took place at Boutsunaris, in Crete, for the purpose of renewing their oath of brotherhood; and he told me that insurrections in the island have always been preceded by such assemblages, and that in the event of the Conference at Constantinople resulting in a rupture between Turkey and the Great Powers, he feared that a serious attempt would shortly be made to excite the Cretans to insurrection.

I asked him whether he had any reason to suspect the Hellenic Government of being concerned in the movement amongst the refugees here, to which he had alluded; but he said that, in so far as he had heard, M. Coumoundouros continued to advise them to keep quiet.

It appears that one of the two Committees has for its object the annexation of Crete to Greece, whilst the other wishes the island to be made a quasi-independent principality.

Under the above circumstances Photiades Bey considers it unfortunate that there

should be a change of Governors in Crete at the present time, more particularly as Réouf Pasha had succeeded in gaining the confidence of the Cretans to an unusual extent.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

No. 329.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 29.)

(No. 11. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Athens, January 20, 1877.*

SINCE it became known here that the Plenipotentiaries at Constantinople had refused to take cognizance of the claims of the Hellenic populations to be placed upon a footing of equality with their Slavonic neighbours, there has been a general desire that the Porte should persist in its refusal to accept the proposals of the European Powers, and that the Conferences should be brought to an intimely end; and it is now reported that all the Christian members of the Grand Council were equally opposed to the acceptance of those proposals when the question was submitted to them by the Porte on the 18th instant.

An unusual feeling of sympathy for Turkey has consequently sprung up in this country.

There is, however, a party which, chafing at the plea said to have been adduced by one or more of the Plenipotentiaries, that there was no Hellenic question before the Conference, will probably endeavour to bring about an Hellenic question by promoting insurrections in Crete and in the Hellenic provinces.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

No. 330.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 29.)

(No. 29. Very Confidential.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, January 21, 1877.*

GENERAL LEFLO, the French Ambassador at this Court, had a conversation with the Emperor at the usual Sunday parade yesterday on the breaking-up of the Conference at Constantinople, when His Majesty stated to him that he would not separate from the European concert, "but he hoped that Europe will not allow a question which was of a purely Christian character, and which equally regarded the honour and interests of all the Powers, to degenerate into a Russo-Turkish question."

I learn from a private source that a Russian Circular is in preparation. It will be addressed to the Powers signatories of the Treaty of Paris, and will state in moderate but energetic language, the past and present policy of the Russian Cabinet in regard to Eastern affairs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 331.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 29.)

(No. 31.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, January 22, 1877.*

I WAITED on Prince Gortchakow this morning with a view to elicit, if possible, what views he entertained as to the future course to be pursued in regard to Eastern affairs on the failure of the Conference at Constantinople.

On entering, and observing to his Highness that since our last interview the fate of the Conference had been settled, his Highness inquired whether I had any mark of a blow on my cheek; observing, "que lui il avait une mauvaise songe, car nous avons tous reçu un soufflet."

I replied to his Highness that certainly I had no sensation of the kind, nor could I view the refusal of the Porte in so serious a light. I observed that we had never

intended to present an ultimatum to the Porte; the common object of the Conference was that of mediation between the Porte and the belligerents, and also to submit to the Porte such proposals for reforms in the government of certain provinces of Turkey as would ensure due protection to the Christian populations, and prevent the recurrence of disorders which were a constant menace to the general tranquillity. However much I might regret the refusal of the Porte to accept the views and proposals of the European Powers, I could not admit that the refusal of the Porte amounted to a personal insult of the nature to which he referred.

In reply to my inquiry as to the course which he should take, his Highness was not enabled to give any direct answer, but he declared that Russia would not separate from the European concert.

He was certainly of opinion that Europe had received an insult which she could not passively accept, and that she ought to defend her honour and have recourse to coercive measures.

His Highness expressed his satisfaction that the Plenipotentiaries, previous to their departure, had all signed a collective Declaration or Protocol, and that they had agreed to give identic instructions to the Chargés d'Affaires at Constantinople to abstain from treating on any political question, and to confine themselves to the transaction of the ordinary current business. His Highness referred to a report which had reached General Ignatiew, that the Porte would offer to negotiate directly with Russia; and he had replied to General Ignatiew that Russia was associated with the other Powers of Europe, and would enter into no negotiation with the Porte independently of Europe.

I inquired of Prince Gortchakow whether he was informed as to the views of the Austrian Cabinet in regard to the present aspect of Eastern affairs.

His Highness replied in the negative, stating, at the same time, that he was awaiting an answer from Vienna, which evidently proves that he has referred to Vienna and Berlin with a view to establish a common understanding with those Courts previous to taking any decision as to the course of Imperial policy in the present state of affairs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 332.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 29.)

(No. 43. Secret.)
My Lord, *Berlin, January 25, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 39, Most Confidential, of the 11th instant, in reply to your Lordship's telegram of the same day, I can now add to what I said then that Count Schouvaloff's assurance to your Lordship that there is an intimate understanding between Austria, Germany, and Russia, has received further confirmation by the confidential exchange of ideas and assurances which is being carried on between them since the close of the Conference at Constantinople.

The frequent interviews between the Russian Ambassador and Prince Bismarck, and the visit of the Grand Duke Wladimir, on the one side, and on the other the journeys of the Austrian Ambassador from Berlin to Vienna and Pesth, as well as the unexpected arrival of the German Ambassador from Vienna on Monday last have given rise to much comment in well-informed circles.

The Russian Government are consulting the German Government about the next steps to be taken, and the Circular they are about to issue respecting the Conference.

Prince Bismarck advises Russia to prosecute her Christian pro-Slav policy in Turkey, and as long as the Emperor William lives it is well known that His Majesty will not allow his nephew the Czar to suffer humiliation or ask in vain if he needs support.

Austria is kept informed of all that passes, but the more immediate object of the German Ambassador's journey from Vienna to Berlin is to communicate secretly to the German Government the fact that the Due Decazes has taken confidential steps to sound Austria as to her attitude if Germany should attack France, a disclosure which has again incensed Prince Bismarck against France and rendered the understanding with Count Andrassy more intimate than ever, since it was accompanied by the renewed assurance that Austria would never separate from her alliance with Germany and Russia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 333.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 29.)

(No. 57.) *Vienna, January 24, 1877.*

My Lord,

ON the receipt of your Lordship's telegram of yesterday I immediately forwarded to Mr. Monson a telegraphic instruction, of which I inclose a copy, to press upon the Prince of Montenegro the expediency of His Highness meeting any overtures of the Turkish Government for peace in a conciliatory spirit, and of his coming to terms with the Porte.

I have also inquired of Baron Orczy whether he has any reason to believe that the Porte is disposed to make such overtures to Servia and Montenegro, but he assured me he was entirely without information on the subject. He said, however, that as the Turkish Ambassador had gone two days ago to Pesth, it was not improbable that he may have made some communication to Count Andrassy as to the wish of the Porte for the re-establishment of peace with the Principalities; but he expressed at the same time a personal opinion that Servia would not venture to make peace without having previously received the assent of Russia, which probably would not be given.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Inclosure in No. 333.

Sir A. Buchanan to Mr. Monson.

Vienna, January 23, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

LORD DERBY informs me that he gathers from what has been said to him by the Turkish Ambassador, that the Porte will probably make overtures for a definitive peace to Servia and Montenegro; and his Lordship, who strongly urged this being done, has directed me to instruct you in case such overtures should be made to the Prince of Montenegro, to press him to show a conciliatory disposition, and to come to terms.

No. 334.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 29.)

(No. 61. Confidential.) *Vienna, January 25, 1877.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 57 of yesterday's date, respecting the alleged intention of the Porte to make overtures to Servia and Montenegro, with a view to a definitive peace, I have the honour to add, that the Turkish Ambassador, who returned yesterday from Pesth, informs me that he has spoken to Count Andrassy on the subject in the same sense as Mussurus Pasha appears to have done to your Lordship.

Count Andrassy seems, however, to have answered him vaguely, and to have said that he could not interfere in the matter until the Powers have had time to come to some common understanding as to the course to be pursued with respect to the affairs of Turkey, in consequence of the refusal of the Porte to accept the proposals of the Conference at Constantinople.

His Excellency also, on being asked whether he believed Russia would declare war, said he was entirely unable to express an opinion upon that point, as he had no other grounds for forming one than the public generally.

I told Aleko Pasha what your Lordship had said as to the expediency of the Porte making peace with Servia and Montenegro, and I strongly advised him to impress upon his Government that the best way of preventing a Russian war was to offer liberal terms to these Principalities, and to carry out with the least possible delay in European Turkey the provisions of the new constitution, which refer to provincial administration and municipal institutions.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN

No. 335.

Safvet Pasha to Mussurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Mussurus Pasha, January 29.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 27 Janvier, 1877.*

CONFORMEMENT aux dispositions de l'Article 17 de la Constitution, qui établit l'égalité de tous les Ottomans devant la loi, et qui prescrit pour tous les sujets les mêmes droits et les mêmes devoirs envers le pays sans préjudice de ce qui concerne la religion, un Iradé de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan ordonne que les enfants non-Musulmans seront désormais admis dans toutes les Ecoles Militaires. Cette décision a été notifiée aux Chefs de toutes les communautés, et publiée dans les journaux, afin que tous ceux qui voudraient entrer dans nos Ecoles Militaires adressent leurs demandes au Ministère de la Guerre en se conformant aux règles établies pour l'admission des élèves Musulmans.

No. 336.

Safvet Pasha to Mussurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Mussurus Pasha, January 29.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 28 Janvier, 1876.*

NOUS apprenons que le Prince Gortchakow a adressé aux Représentants de Russie une Circulaire pour s'informer de l'attitude que les Puissances comptent prendre à la suite de notre refus d'adhérer au programme de la Conférence.

Il est à craindre que cette démarche n'ait pour but d'amener les autres Puissances à s'entendre sur une nouvelle action dans un sens favorable à la pensée du Cabinet de St. Pétersbourg, pensée que nous ignorons, mais qui peut avoir pour effet de faire naître de nouvelles difficultés, et tout au moins d'entraver nos efforts pour la prompte application de nos réformes Constitutionnelles et d'inspirer des doutes sur la sincérité de nos intentions par des suggestions intéressées; et j'ai la conviction que le langage de votre Excellence confirmera sa Seigneurie dans la pensée qu'il importe au plus haut point de ne point permettre que la politique du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique se trouve engagée dans un sens qui préjudicie à la situation qui nous a été faite, ou qui préjuge d'une manière arbitraire des mesures comprises dans le programme Européen et auxquelles nous avons donné notre adhésion.

Veuillez prémunir Lord Derby contre les tendances éventuelles de cette nouvelle démarche de la Russie.

Nous espérons que sa Seigneurie, persuadée, comme elle doit l'être actuellement, de la ferme intention du Gouvernement Impérial de marcher résolûment et sans retard dans la voie des réformes les plus larges, ne se laissera pas surprendre par des suggestions tendantes à représenter sous une lumière défavorable aux intérêts du Gouvernement Ottoman les actes et les faits sur lesquels nous comptons pour nous rallier bientôt complètement l'opinion de l'Europe éclairée et impartiale.

No. 337.

Memorandum communicated by M. Gennadius, January 29, 1877.

HIS Majesty's Vice-Consul at Cavalla (Macedonia) reports the details of a massacre and pillage lately committed on the Greek inhabitants of the village of Boulounstra, in the district of Xanthi, between Yenitzé and Keramoti. It appears that for a long time past the fanatical Mahommedan peasants of Boulounstra meditated an attack upon the modest possessions of their Christian neighbours, and carried it into execution on the first night of the Bairam, aided by their co-religionists from the surrounding farms. Five of the villagers, amongst them a woman, who bravely defended her husband when assailed, were murdered and the assailants took to flight, only one of their number being killed, and the alarm being raised by the Christians.

Night covered their escape, and the apathy of the authorities has so far allowed the assailants to go undetected and unpunished. But it is generally believed that they were principally men in the employ of Deré-bey Chalil-Aga, of Xanthi, and M. Pappadopoulos

reports the prevailing and well-founded fear of a repetition of such acts, unrestrained as they seem to be by the authorities.

His Excellency, M. Contostavlos, considers it unnecessary to comment upon facts, the eloquent simplicity of which is of a sad importance for the future. But he trusts that Her Majesty's Government will be pleased to discern in these incidents that which the Hellenic Government cannot help seeing—the commencement of fresh disasters for the Greek populations of Turkey, who, as it is well known, have avoided giving by their conduct the least pretext to their Ottoman neighbours for the commission of such acts, and whose attitude has certainly never provoked them.

No. 338.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Jocelyn.

Foreign Office, January 29, 1877, 5 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

INQUIRE whether the Engineer officers under Colonel Home now are, and which of them are, coming home in consequence of telegram of the 23rd instant to Sir H. Elliot.

Inform me of answer.

No. 339.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 29.)

Vienna, January 29, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to whom I communicated the substance of Mr. Jocelyn's telegram of yesterday, and to whom I have spoken of the Prince of Servia's answer to the Grand Vizier, says that Count Andrassy has hitherto abstained from expressing an opinion on the subject, and that Russian Ambassador professes to know nothing of the feeling of his Government with respect to it.

Baron Orczy, however, does not believe that the Princes would negotiate without having been encouraged from St. Petersburgh.

He says that the possibility of Austria occupying the Herzegovina could not induce Prince of Montenegro to continue war, as he must know that in that case he could gain nothing by doing so, but that it is not to be expected that he will make peace without obtaining the concessions recommended by the Conference.

No. 340.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 29.)

Vienna, January 29, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

TURKISH Ambassador communicated to-day to the Servian Agent a telegram instructing him to state that the Porte having no intention of profiting by success of its arms, is ready to make peace on the basis of the *status quo ante*, but that he was to add it would be the duty of the Turkish Government to obtain guarantees for the future which could only be defined during the progress of the negotiations, in order to begin which it is important that a Servian delegate should be sent immediately to Constantinople.

The Servian Agent observed that asking for guarantees is inconsistent with offer of peace on the *status quo ante*. The Ambassador, however, does not believe that the Porte will allow this to become an obstacle to the restoration of peace.

He has not yet communicated the telegram to the Count Andrassy, as his Excellency, who is probably communicating with Berlin and St. Petersburgh on the subject, on his request for an audience, excused himself from seeing him till to-morrow.

No. 341.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Jocelyn.

(No. 49.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 29, 1877.

ODIAN EFFENDI called upon me to-day, and read to me a telegram from the Grand Vizier, expressing in general terms his desire to adopt as far as possible the reforms recommended by the Conference. Midhat Pasha hoped that in taking this course he should have the goodwill and friendship of Her Majesty's Government.

I replied that our object in bringing about the Conference which had lately held its sittings had been two-fold: first, to preserve the peace of Europe, which appeared to be in danger; and, next, to bring about a material improvement in the internal administration of the Turkish Empire. For my own part, and expressing my personal opinion only, I cared comparatively little for questions of form, provided the end for which we had laboured was attained. I thought that the more nearly the Government of the Sultan found itself able to conform to the general system of administration recommended by the Conference, the less opportunity could be afforded to those who might wish to take advantage of its failure as a pretext for war.

Odian Effendi then referred to the question of a general amnesty, which he understood to be desired by the Powers, and he said that the Grand Vizier was anxious to adopt this measure, but that it must be an amnesty extending to Turks and Christians alike.

I asked, whether it was meant by this that the authors of the Bulgarian massacres should also be included in the amnesty?

He gave no direct answer to this inquiry, but dwelt at some length on the difficulty of making exceptions.

I pointed out that in that case the measure proposed would do more harm than good, since it would not be thought consistent with justice that the authors of these outrages, which had caused so great a sensation in Europe, should be placed on the same footing as those who had merely been drawn into insurrection by the example of others.

Odian Effendi asked what advice I should give under the circumstances.

I said that I must decline to advise, but that, expressing, as before, my own personal opinion merely, it seemed to me that the great mass of prisoners might in any case be released at once; but that those against whom, whether Turks or Christians, there were charges of having been concerned in the massacres which had taken place, ought not to be exempted from punishment.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 342.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 30.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 29, 1877.

COUNT BEUST informed me to-day that he had learnt by telegram from Vienna that no step had been taken there with the view of bringing about peace between the Porte and Servia and Montenegro, because it could not yet be foreseen what would be the attitude of Russia with regard to the question. The Servian Agent had, his Excellency said, inquired whether the Austro-Hungarian Government would encourage his Government in that direction, but, on being asked if he was acting in the name of his Government, had replied in the negative.

The Servian Government had made a direct application to St. Petersburgh to ascertain whether Russia counted on their participation in a war, and what subsidies she would pay; a reply had been promised within six days, which term had now expired. In the meanwhile, the Servian Agent had informed the Austrian Government that his Government had accepted the Turkish proposal; and he had asked that, as Servia had no Agent at Constantinople, the bases of the negotiations might be forwarded to the Grand Vizier by the Ottoman Ambassador at Vienna, and to the Prince's Government by Count Andrassy.

His Excellency added that M. Zukicz had already placed himself in communication with the Ottoman Ambassador at Vienna.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY

No. 343.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 29, at night.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, January 29, 1877.*

ASSISTANT Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me to-day that Imperial Government has signified to Princes of Montenegro and Servia that in reply to overtures of the Porte they must act in accordance with their own individual interests, and that Russia can neither advise nor aid them. Russian circular will be sent in three or four days. It will explain past and consult, as regards present and future, with a view to maintain European concert. Austrian Cabinet, I am told, is very reserved.

No. 344.

Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 29, at night.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 29, 1877, 10 P.M.*

GRAND Vizier has learnt with extreme regret that efforts are making in Dalmatia to foment a fresh insurrection in the Herzegovina, in spite of Porte's endeavours to restore tranquillity.

Some of the insurgents who have returned to their homes are being again incited to rebellion by their Dalmatian neighbours, upon whom, his Highness says, the Austrian Government neither care nor desire to impose the observation of a strict neutrality, especially as they persist in maintaining General Rodich as Governor of Dalmatia.

His Highness has telegraphed in this sense to the Turkish Ambassador at Vienna, and earnestly requests that Her Majesty's Ambassador may be instructed to represent to the Austrian Government the mischievous character of such proceedings, especially at present, when peace negotiations may be looked for.

His Highness evidently regards this new insurrection as likely to serve as a pretext for an Austrian occupation of Bosnia.

No. 345.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January 30.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, January 29, 1877.*

LE Prince Milan vient de répondre au télégramme de son Altesse le Grand Vizir. Il déclare lui-même du désir de mettre un terme à une lutte sanglante, et de faciliter le rétablissement des bons rapports avec la Sublime Porte. Il est prêt à entrer en négociations directes avec le Gouvernement Impérial; mais, n'ayant pas pour le moment un Agent à Constantinople, il prie le Grand Vizir de communiquer à celui de Vienne par le canal de notre Ambassade les bases sur lesquelles les négociations devront être entamées. Conformément à cette proposition, nous avons chargé Aleco Pacha de dire à l'Agent de Servie que la Sublime Porte, animée des dispositions bienveillantes, ne voudrait point user des droits que lui ont acquis les victoires de ses armes, et qu'elle consent au rétablissement de la paix sur la base du *statu quo ante bellum*, devant prémunir seulement de garanties pour l'avenir. Quant à la nature de ces garanties combinées, elle ne peut être définie que par le cours des négociations.

Nous avons prié le Prince Milan, toujours par le canal de son Agent à Vienne, d'envoyer le plus tôt possible un Délégué Spécial à Constantinople pour entrer directement en pourparlers avec la Sublime Porte.

Le Prince de Monténégro n'a pas encore répondu au télégramme du Grand Vizir; mais, d'après nos renseignements indirects, notre démarche a produit une bonne impression sur lui.

Nous espérons que les Puissances Garantes voudront bien encourager les deux Principautés à faire bon accueil aux ouvertures bienveillantes de la Sublime Porte.

No. 346.

Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 30.)

(Telegraphic.) *Ragusa, January 29, 1877.*

I SHALL start to-morrow morning, and hope to arrive at Cettigné on Wednesday afternoon.

I would respectfully suggest (as my Italian colleague is doing to his Government) that I should be furnished by telegraph with the views of Her Majesty's Government as to the rectification of the frontier and especially as to seaport, upon which Prince Nicholas is certain to question me.

There is much activity among insurgent chiefs, and all that I hear makes me very doubtful of the success of the negotiations with Montenegro.

In my opinion it depends exclusively upon the attitude of Russia, whose Agent is still absent at St. Petersburgh.

No. 347.

Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 30, 3·30 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 30, 1877, 1·45 P.M.*

GRAND VIZIER appears satisfied with reply from Prince Milan regarding peace overtures, and he has agreed to His Highness's proposal that the conditions should be communicated to Servian Agent at Vienna by the Porte's Ambassador.

Although *status quo ante* is the basis proposed, Ambassador is directed to intimate that the Porte will expect certain guarantees against future agression to be discussed later on with the Servian Plenipotentiary at Constantinople.

They appear to consist principally of an engagement by Servia to abstain from erection of fortifications and from permitting the settlement of disaffected Bulgarians on her territory.

Question of these guarantees rested entirely with the Porte, and need not be urged at present; meaning, I presume, that if negotiations required it, they might be modified or abandoned.

No. 348.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, January 30, 1877, 4·10 P.M.*

FORWARD following to Mr. Monson:—

"With reference to your telegram of yesterday, Her Majesty's Government cannot undertake to lay down or recommend terms which either the Porte or Montenegro should accept; but they are sincerely anxious that a fair and lasting arrangement should now be made. They are convinced that Montenegro is never likely to obtain better terms than at the present moment, and that a renewal of the war would be very injurious to her interests."

No. 349.

Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 30, 6·4 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, January 30, 1877, 4 P.M.*

FOLLOWING from Consul at Erzeroom, dated this morning:—

"Panic in Bitlis district; several murders; many villages devastated and others deserted by inhabitants from dread of companies who threaten towns. Inhabitants, Mahomedan and Christian, watch armed in their barricaded houses."

I shall communicate this to the Porte.

No. 350.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 27.)

Foreign Office, January 30, 1877.

Sir,

I APPROVE the language in which, as reported in your despatch No. 61 of the 25th instant, your Excellency impressed upon the Turkish Ambassador the importance of peace being concluded by the Porte with Servia and Montenegro, and of the provisions of the new Constitution, relating to provincial administration and municipal institutions being at once carried out.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 351.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 29.)

Foreign Office, January 30, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received to-day, through your Excellency, a telegram from Mr. Monson, in which he suggests that he should be informed by telegraph of the views of Her Majesty's Government upon the subject of the rectification of the Montenegrin frontier, and specially upon the question of the cession of a sea-port to the Principality, respecting which he thought that he would certainly be questioned by Prince Nicholas.

I have requested you by telegraph to reply to him that Her Majesty's Government cannot undertake to lay down or to recommend the terms which should be accepted either by the Porte or by Montenegro; but that it is their sincere wish that the negotiations about to commence should result in the prompt conclusion of a fair and lasting arrangement; and I have authorized you to add that it is not probable, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, that Montenegro will ever be able to obtain better terms than she can secure at the present moment; whereas, on the other hand, her interests would unquestionably be seriously injured by a renewal of the war.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 352.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Jocelyn.

(No. 48.)

Foreign Office, January 30, 1877.

Sir,

THE Turkish Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and communicated to me a telegram from Safvet Pasha, of which I inclose a copy,* stating that it was understood by the Porte that Prince Gortchakow had addressed a Circular to the Representatives of Russia with the view of bringing about some fresh concerted action of the Powers in regard to Turkey. Safvet Pasha expresses a hope that Her Majesty's Government will not join in any measures which may be calculated to embarrass the Turkish Government in the endeavours they are now making to institute real and effective reforms in the administration of the Empire.

I told Musurus Pasha that I did not believe that the Circular of Prince Gortchakow had yet been sent. I had at all events no knowledge of it, and until I was aware of its contents it was, of course, impossible for me to say what answer Her Majesty's Government would return to it. His Excellency knew, however, the objects with which Her Majesty's Government had gone into the Conference, and the attitude they had taken in regard to the proposals put forward in it. They had declared, on the one hand, that they were not prepared to adopt coercive measures to enforce those proposals on the Porte; and, on the other, that they would not protect the Porte from the consequences of a refusal to accept them. I saw no present reason for departing from that position and I did not suppose that we should be desirous of at once lending ourselves to any fresh concerted action in regard to Turkey.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

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* No. 300.

No. 353.

Mr. St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 30, *at night.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, January 30, 1877.

PRINCE MILAN has received intelligence from the Grand Vizier expressing satisfaction at his overture being favourably received, and, assuming that the basis negotiated will be substantially the *status quo*, adds that a guarantee will be required.

Servian Government requests your Lordship's good offices that the question of guarantee may be dropped, as its nature is not known.

Reply to Grand Vizier is deferred pending your Lordship's answer.

My Italian colleague has been informed by his Government that the guarantee consists in a pacific attitude being maintained in the event of hostilities between Russia and Turkey, to which Servian Minister for Foreign Affairs informs me there would be no objection.

No. 354.

Mr. St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 31, 12·1 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, January 31, 1877, 11·40 A.M.

WITH reference to my telegram of yesterday, Servian Government have applied to France and Italy for good offices.

The question of guarantee is inadmissible.

No. 355.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Jocelyn.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, January 31, 1877, 6·30 P.M.

WHAT are the guarantees which the Porte is asking from Servia? It would surely be better to propose the *status quo* simply.

No. 356.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. St. John.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, January 31, 1877, 6·35 P.M.

I AM not informed of the character of the guarantee supposed to be required by the Porte from Servia, and cannot express an opinion till I know it.

But I have already stated that basis of peace ought to be the *status quo*.

No. 357.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 31.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, January 31, 1877.

AT the Turkish Ambassador's interview to-day with Count Andrassy, the latter expressed regret that the Porte had attached a question of guarantees to the proposals of Servia, and urged the expediency of its being abandoned. He represented, at the same time, that the Porte, making peace with Servia, would greatly facilitate her negotiations with Montenegro. I understand that the guarantees will probably be limited to an extension of the armistice, to prevent possibility of the negotiations being interrupted. I have endeavoured to impress on the Turkish Ambassador the importance to Turkey of peace re-established before the meeting of Parliament.

No. 358.

Consul-General Green to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 31, *night.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Scutari, January* 31, 1877.

TELEGRAPHED to Constantinople:—

The Miridites have assumed a hostile attitude by occupying the high roads passing through the district, and by making prisoner an Envoy sent to them by the Governor.

I am endeavouring to induce the authorities to adopt towards movement the conciliatory policy suggested in my despatch No. 90 of the 23rd ultimo.

END